

# **Brahmana and Vaisnava**

The conclusive comparison between brahmanas and Vaisnavas

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**Prakṛti-jana-kanda**

## Section Concerning Worldly People

The pure tracts of land known as Aryavarta and Dakshinatya, which have existed since time immemorial and which stretch from the eastern ocean to the western ocean and from the Himalaya Mountains in the North down to the abode of the demons in the South, are presently known as Bharata-varsha, or India. Being known since time immemorial as karma-ksetra, or the field of fruitive activities, this Bharata-varsha is the land of various activities of innumerable expert fruitive workers. Sometimes the skies of Bharata-varsha are saturated with the sages' chanting of hymns from the Vedas and the smoke emanating from the sacrificial fires, sometimes the land of Bharata-varsha is soaked with blood from battles between the demigods and demons, sometimes the demons are destroyed by the wonderful prowess of incarnations of the Supreme Lord, sometimes philosophers debate, poets compose sweet verses, scientists display extraordinary expertise-foreigners are astonished on seeing these social and cultural arrangements-in this way various scenes appear in one's heart while reflecting on the land of Bharata. In all these scenes we can see one community as the principle hero; that is the community of brahmanas. The creator of this universe is Lord Brahma; so those who are born from his head, his principle limb, into the field of fruitive activities, those foremost sons and their descendants accepted the designation of brahmana and thus spread his glories. Even today in India the glories of the brahmanas are accepted as truth by men and women, from childhood to old age.

From time immemorial the prestige of the brahmanas has surpassed all opposition and remained intact. Many historical incidents support this fact. All Sanskrit literatures proclaim the glories of the brahmanas. It is stated in the Mahabharata (Vana-parva, Chapter 206):

*indro 'py esam pranamate    kim punar manavo bhuvi*

*brahmana hy agni-sadrsa daheyuh prthivim api  
apeyah sagarah krodhat krto hi lavanodakah  
yesam krodhagnir adyapi dandake nopasamyati  
bahu prabhavah srutyante brahmananam mahatmanam*

"Even Indra, the King of the demigods, offers obeisances to the brahmanas, so what can be said of the people of earth? The brahmanas are as powerful as fire; if they want they can burn the entire world to ashes. The water of the ocean is salty and therefore undrinkable due to the anger of the brahmanas. The fire in the Dandakaranya forest started by the brahmanas' anger cannot be extinguished even today. Many similar glories of the pious brahmanas are heard." A compiler of Dharma-sastras, Visnu (19.20-23), has stated:

*devah paroksa-devah. pratyaksa-devah brahmanah.*

*brahmanair loka dharyante.*

*brahmananam prasadena divi tisthanti devatah*

*brahmanabhihitam vakyam na mithya jayate kvacit*

*yad brahmanas tustatama vadanti*

*tad devatah pratyabhinandayanti*

*tustesu tustah satatam bhavanti pratyaksa-devesu paroksa-devah*

"The demigods are not seen by gross senses. The brahmanas are manifestations of the demigods. The brahmanas sustain all the planets. The demigods reside in the heavenly planets by the mercy of the

brahmanas. The brahmanas' words can never be false. Whatever the brahmanas speak in great satisfaction is accepted by the demigods. When the manifested forms of the demigods, the brahmanas, are satisfied, the demigods, who are beyond sense perception, are also satisfied." Another compiler of Dharma-sastras, Brhaspati (49, 50, 52), has stated:

*sastram ekakinam hanti vipra-manyuh kula-ksayam*

*cakrat tivra-taro manyus tasmad vipram na kopayet*

*raja dahati dandena vipro dahati manyuna*

"A weapon can destroy only one person, but the anger of a brahmana can destroy one's entire family. The anger of a brahmana is more fiercely powerful than a disc, so one should not make a brahmana angry. A king burns through his punishment, while a brahmana burns through his anger."

Other compilers of Dharma-sastras, Parasara (6.60, 61) and Satatapa (1.27, 30), have stated:

*brahmana yani bhasante bhasante tani devatah*

*sarva-deva-maya vipra na tad vacanam anyatha*

*brahmana jangamam tirtham nirjanam sarva-kamadam*

*tesam vakyodakenaiva sudhyanti malina janah*

"Whatever the brahmanas speak, those are the words of the demigods.

The brahmanas are the manifestation of all the demigods. Their words never prove false. The brahmanas are moving secluded holy places that fulfill all desires. Sinful persons are purified by the pure as water words of the brahmanas." A compiler of Dharma-sastras, Vyasa (4.9, 10, 54), has stated:

*brahmanat paramam tirtham na bhutam na bhavisyati*

*yat phalam kapiladane kartikyam jyestha-puskare*

*tat phalam rsayah srestha vipranam pada-saucane*

*vipra-padodaka-klinna yavat tisthati medini*

*tavat puskarapatresu pibanti pitaro 'mrtam*

*yasya dehe sadasnanti havyani tri-divaukasah*

*kavyani caiva pitarah kim bhutam adhikam tatah*

"There is no other, nor will there be, a superior holy place than a brahmana. O best of the sages, simply by honoring the water that has washed the feet of a brahmana one achieves the same result that one attains by donating a brown cow on the full-moon day of Kartika. As long as the earth is moistened by the water that has washed a brahmana's feet, the forefathers will drink nectar from lotus vessels. Through the body of a brahmana, the demigods, though living in heaven, always eat havya offerings and the forefathers in Pitrloka always eat kavya offerings, so who can be superior to such brahmanas?" In the Bhargaviya Manusmriti (1.93, 94, 96, 99-101) it is stated:

*sarvasyaivasya sargasya dharmato brahmanah prabhuh*

*havya-kavyabhivahyaya sarvasyasya ca guptaye  
buddhimatsu narah srestha naresu brahmanah smrtah  
brahmano jayamano hi prthivya adhijayate  
isvarah sarva-bhutanam dharma-kosasya guptaye  
sarvam svam brahmanasyedam yat kincij jagati-gatam  
sraisthyenabhijanenedam sarvam vai brahmano 'rhati  
svam eva brahmano bhunkte svam vaste svam dadati ca  
anrsamsyad brahmanasya bhunjate hitare janah*

"The brahmanas have become the lords of the entire creation through their religious counsel. The brahmanas were born in order to receive havya and kavya offerings on behalf of the demigods and forefathers. Among those with developed intelligence, the human beings are the highest. Among the human beings, the brahmanas are the highest. As soon as they are born, the brahmanas assume the topmost position in this world, and in order to protect religious principles they become the lords of all living entities. All the wealth of this world belongs to the brahmanas. Due to their high birth, the brahmanas are meant to receive all sorts of wealth. Whatever foods a brahmana accepts from others, whatever clothes he accepts from others, whatever items he accepts from others, and whatever items he gives in charity in fact belong to him. Only by his mercy can other people enjoy these things." Sri Parasara (8.32) further says:

*duhsilo 'pi dvijah pujoya na sudro vijitendriyah  
kah parityajya dustam gam duhec chilavatim kharim*

"Even if a respectable brahmana who has undergone all reformatory processes is sinful, he should still be worshiped. A self-controlled sudra who is always lamenting, however, should never be worshiped. Who will reject an ill-natured cow to milk a well-behaved she-ass?" Forsaking the Vedic way of life can never be compared with the godless, ever-lamenting, averse to the Vedas state of the sudras.

The prestige of the brahmanas is seen throughout the Ramayana, the Puranas, and the Tantras. Religious-minded people always carefully protect the prestigious position of the brahmanas. In fact throughout the four yugas, religious-minded people of India have neither disrespected nor considered that others should disrespect the brahmanas. In a place where proper respect for each of the varnas is found in social dealings, each varna displays its own greatness by endeavoring to increase the prestigious position of the brahmanas.

All brahmanas are superior to, the protectors of, and more powerful than the demigods, the other castes headed by the ksatriyas, the animals, the birds, the reptiles, and the plants. Due to their sharp intelligence they are capable of acquiring all kinds of knowledge and are exclusively qualified to impart knowledge to others. By virtue of their keen intelligence, they are worshipers of the demigods, they are respectful to the ksatriyas, they are the well-wishers of the vaisyas, sudras, antyajnas, and mlecchas, and they assist in the worship of the demigods. On the strength of their renunciation, they are unattached to their assets, they earn their livelihood by begging, and they give their surplus in charity.

Those who have accepted the Aryan way of life in India-the followers of the Vedas, the smartas, the followers of the Puranas, the followers of the Tantras-all offer respects to the brahmanas. The brahmanas are the only masters and experts in executing the three types of rituals. Animals and persons other than brahmanas are naturally obliged to these persons who are endowed with such influence. We are unable to understand who would not desire the mercy of personalities who have such authority, respect from the demigods, and omnipotency. Not only the Aryans, but every Indian; not only the Indians, but the people of the entire world; not

only the people, but all living entities; not only the living entities, but even the inanimate world- all should more or less know the uncommon power and influence of the brahmanas and thus certainly consider them to be in the topmost position. The statements of Vaisnava literatures, the far-sighted teachings of sages who are adorned with varieties of knowledge and transcendent opulences, and the unwavering faith of perceptive Indians who respect the scriptures cannot be considered by us as simply encouragement for the wild dancing of useless gossipers.

If one studies the statements of the scriptures of India regarding the prestigious position of the brahmanas with a narrow mind, then all the expected conclusions will turn into churning waves within the ocean of arguments. Such heaps of biased arguments are not pleasing to the ears of opposing thinkers; they only promote the interest of the propounder. The esteemed logicians who maintain such ideas soon fall from their own self-interest and display their narrow sectarian spirit by disrespecting impartiality. Such logicians go to England, Japan, Germany, or America but are unable to attract the faith of intelligent people of those countries in their biased interpretations of the scriptures. If they give up their self-interest and consider things impartially, however, then the deep meaning of the scriptures' purports will easily be revealed in their hearts. In brief, we can say that things in general are perceived as auspicious or inauspicious when seen by swanlike or asslike people respectively; such distinctions of auspicious and inauspicious are the result of these person's language and mentality. As far as we are concerned, we are not busy in simply carrying the load of the scriptures, rather we are on the front line of accepting their essence. I cannot say whether those who have given up the path of reasoning and foolishly accepted carrying the load as the goal will be happy by our presentation.

If we want to analyze who is actually such an influential brahmana, we can find in Manu's Dharma-sastra that in the beginning of creation the universe we now see was devoid of characteristics, invisible, and full of darkness. Thereafter the self-manifest Lord agitated the maha-bhutas and other material elements and entered within in order to illuminate this unmanifest universe. Lord Narayana first created water, and with a desire to produce various progeny from His own body He then placed His seed



in it. From His seed a golden egg as brilliant as a thousand suns appeared. Lord Brahma, the creator of all the worlds, was born from that egg. In order to increase the population of all planets, brahmanas were born from the mouth of Brahma, ksatriyas were born from his arms, vaisyas were born from his thighs, and sudras were born from his feet. Thus the four varnas were created. This is explained in the first chapter (5, 6, 8, 9, 31) of Manu's Dharma-sastra as follows:

*asid idam tamo-bhutam    aprajnatam alaksanam  
tatah svayambhur bhagavan    avyakto vyanjayan idam  
mahabhutadi vrttaujah    pradurasit tamo-nudah  
so 'bhidhyaya sarirat svat    sisrksur vividhah prajah  
apa eva sasarjadau    tasu bijam avasrjat  
tad andam abhavad dhaimam    sahasramsu-sama-prabham  
tasmin jajne svayam brahma    sarva-loka-pitamahah  
lokanam tu vivrddhy-artham    mukha-bahuru-padatah  
brahmanam ksatriyam vaisyam    sudram ca niravartayat*

In the Rg-parisista it is stated:

*brahmano 'sya mukham asid    bahu rajanyah krtah  
uru tad asya yad vaisyah    padbhyam sudro `jayata*

"The brahmana appeared from his face, the royal class from his arms, the vaisya from his thighs, and the sudra was born from his feet."

A compiler of Dharma-sastras, Harita (1.12, 15), has stated:

*yajna-siddhy-artham anaghan brahmanan mukhato 'srjat*  
*brahmanyam brahmanenaivam utpanno brahmanah smrtah*

"From the mouth the sinless brahmanas were created for the purpose of performing sacrifices. The child born of a brahmana in the womb of his brahmana wife is known as a brahmana." Yajnavalkya (1.90) has stated:

*savarnebhyah savarnasu jayante vai sva-jatayah*

"When men of the various castes headed by the brahmanas produce children in the wombs of their wives belonging respectively to the same caste, their sons attain the same caste as their fathers."

When intercaste marriages first became current, the sons born from brahmanas in the womb of either a ksatriya or vaisya woman were also accepted as brahmanas.

*brahmanyam brahmanaj jato brahmanah syan na samsayah*  
*ksatriyayam tathaiva syat vaisyayam api caiva hi*

"The son born of a brahmana in the womb of a brahmana woman is

undoubtedly a brahmana, and the son born of a brahmana in the womb of a ksatriya or vaisya woman is also a brahmana." But medieval smartas such as Kulluka, a commentator on the Manu-samhita, and Vijnanesvara, the author of the Mitaksara, consider that these intercaste children belong to the caste of their mothers. In the Manu-samhita (10.6) it is stated:

*strisv anantara-jatasu dvijair utpaditan sutan*

*sadrsan eva tan ahur matr-dosa-vigarhitan*

"Sons begotten in the wombs of women belonging to castes lower than that of the father are considered as similar to the father but contaminated due to their mothers' inferior position." In the opinion of some commentators like Kulluka, the caste status of such sons is inferior to that of their fathers and superior to that of their mothers. In some places these sons are given designations like *murdhabhisikta*. It is stated in the

Manu-samhita (10.41) as follows:

*viprasya trisu varnesu nrpater varnayor dvayoh*

*vaisyasya varne caikasmin sad ete 'pasadah smrtah*

*sajati-jan antara-jah sat suta dvija-dharminah*

*sudranam tu sadharmanah sarve 'padhvamsa-jah smrtah*

"Children born from a brahmana father and a ksatriya, vaisya, or sudra mother; from a ksatriya father and a vaisya or sudra mother; and from a vaisya father and a sudra mother-these six are inferior to the children

born of parents belonging to the same caste."

Sons born of brahmana parents, sons born of ksatriya parents, and sons born of vaisya parents, as well as sons born from brahmana father and either ksatriya or vaisya mother and sons born of ksatriya father and vaisya mother are all considered among the dvijas, or twice-born. They are therefore all eligible for accepting the sacred thread and the other brahminical samskaras. Those sutas, magadhas, and others who are born through pratiloma marriages involving the twice-born classes, such as sudra father with brahmana mother, vaisya father with brahmana mother, or ksatriya father with brahmana mother, sudra father with ksatriya mother, sudra father with vaisya mother, and vaisya father with ksatriya mother, are all considered sudras and therefore do not undergo the sacred thread ceremony.

When the sages who compiled the twenty Dharma-sastras assisted the kings in controlling and maintaining human society, they directed society in following the path of ritualistic fruitive activities. The compilers of the Puranas also recorded the customs and activities of those times. The methods found in the Itihasas and Puranas for ascertaining who was a brahmana are often more or less the same as those found in the Dharma-sastras. Although the Dharma-sastras are composed of rules and regulations, how those rules and regulations were followed in practice and respected by the people of this world has been described by the learned writers of the Itihasas in the course of their describing historical events. In ancient times the activities of the varnas were determined in different provinces by the various textbooks of practical application of rituals belonging to the different branches of the Vedas. That is why the behavior of a family in one region was different from that of a family in another region.

Textbooks of practical application like the Asvalayana-grhya-sutras and Sankhayana-srauta-sutras among the Rg Veda branches, the Latyayana-srauta-sutras and Gobhiliya-grhya-sutras of the Sama Veda branches, the Katyayana-srauta-sutras and Paraskariya-grhya-sutras of the Sukla-yajur Veda branches, and the Apastambiya-srauta-sutras of the Krsna-

yajur Veda branches, as well as the Kausitaka-sutras of the Atharva Veda branches were more or less mastered under the support of kings by the sages who compiled the twenty Dharma-sastras.

Moreover, the rules and regulations of a particular Dharma-sastra were followed according to the particular place. In the opinion of some persons, at the beginning of the Kali age the Manu Dharma-sastra and the doctrine of Parasara Muni were prominently accepted, while the other twenty Dharma-sastras were neglected. Others say that the doctrine of Harita was prominent and the activities prescribed by the other Dharma-sastras were neglected. Generally, whatever one found convenient was accepted, without regard for other's consent and liking.

In the medieval age, many new smrtis were compiled on the basis of the Dharma-sastras in various parts of the country. Sometimes people gave special credence to certain parts of the Dharma-sastra lawbooks to suit their own taste, and sometimes they neglected the main purpose of the Dharma-sastras by rejecting those portions that did not suit their taste. Those who are conversant with various scriptures can often see this from their study of various books. When the ritualistic smrti-sastras are effective for a particular person, in a particular place, at a particular time, then that particular person at that particular place and time has a high regard for those scriptures. But we cannot say whether this same regard was felt or accepted by other persons in other places and times.

One cannot expect that the ritualistic smrti-sastras will be fully honored by all persons, at all places, and at all times. At those times, in those places, and for those persons for which ritualistic practices are prominent and the topics of jnana and bhakti were not respected, are not respected, and will not be respected, any conduct other than that prescribed in the smrti-sastras have certainly been neglected, are being neglected, and will be neglected. Evidence from the many Vedic sutras, the twenty Dharma-sastras, the Puranas, the Itihasas, the Yamalas, the Pancaratras, and the Tantras is found in the writings of the learned compilers of smrti-sastras of our country, Raghunandana Bhattacarya and Kamalakara. Madhava's Kala-madhava, Kamalakara's Nirnaya-sindhu, Candesvara's Vivada-ratnakara, Vacaspati's Vivada-cintamani, Jimutavuhana's Daya-bhaga and Kala-viveka, Halayudha's Brahmana-sarvasva, Sulapani's

Prayascitta-viveka, Chalarī Nṛsimhācārya's Smṛty-artha-sāgara, Ananda Tīrtha's Sad-ācara-smṛti, Nimbādīta's Surendra-dharma-mañjarī, Kṛṣṇadeva's Nṛsimha-parīcārya and Rāmārcana-candrikā-in all these digests differences of opinions due to different tastes are found. Whatever opinion the author nourishes has been supported by those statements of previous sages that suit their taste.

In regards to a brahmana's qualification by birth: in the Anuśāsana-parva of the Mahābhārata and in other scriptures, the āpasadas, anulomajas, mūrdhabhisikṭas, and āmbasthas are specifically accepted as authorised brahmanas. In many parts of India the sons of āpasadas, mūrdhabhisikṭas, and āmbasthas are known as brahmanas and considered equal to those born in strict brahminical lineage. In some parts of India, however, they are rejected and not included amongst the brahmanas. If one studies the Samhitas and certain other parts of the Vedas, the reader will obtain a clear impression that the overall message of the Vedas is the path of fruitive activities. But if one studies texts like the Upaniśads, which are the "head" of the Vedas, then one will certainly receive the impression that the science of self-realization is superior, and consequently the path of fruitive activities will appear less important.

Moreover, there are two tendencies among the readers of the Upaniśads. Some, with a desire to enhance their knowledge of the self, take help from fruitive activities in order to attain the contrary mentality of monism, in which they ultimately give up all activities and practice renunciation. Others, who neither accept nor reject the fruitive activities of this world, neither accept the help of karma-kāṇḍa nor the philosophy of jñāna-kāṇḍa, rather they realize that the Truth established in the Vedas is full of spiritual variegatedness, and thus they engage in His devotional service. A certain great soul who understood that religious persons belong to three categories expressed his understanding in the following verse, quoted by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in his Śrī Pādyaṇḍali:

*karmavalambakah kecit    kecij jñanavalambakah*

*vayam tu hari-dāśanam    pada-tranavalambakah*

"Among religious-minded people, some follow the path of fruitive activities and some follow the path of mental speculation, but our only resort is to carry the shoes of Lord Hari's servants." Karma and jnana are two branches of the Vedic tree. Those who have taken shelter of these two branches have certainly fallen from the standard of pure devotional service. Pure devotional service is the topmost ripened fruit of the Vedic tree. In the field of fruitive activities all people are bound by the fruits of their actions. Although one is freed from bondage to the fruits of karma by the process of jnana, until one takes to pure devotional service he remains bound by the fruits of his karma. Therefore the jnanis are by their own identification bound in fruitive activities. The Srimad Bhagavatam (3.23.56) says:

*neha yat karma dharmaya na viragaya kalpate*

*na tirtha-pada-sevayai jivann api mrto hi sah*

"Anyone whose work is not meant to elevate him to religious life, anyone whose religious ritualistic performances do not raise him to renunciation, and anyone situated in renunciation that does not lead him to devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, must be considered dead, although he is breathing." People engage in fruitive activities according to their own desires. These activities are divided into four categories-akarma, or actions without fruitive reactions, vikarma, or unauthorized or sinful work, kukarma, or acts against the principles of religion, and sat-karma, or pious activities. From the mundane point of view, those activities that are in the mode of goodness, or that are moral and beneficial for others, are called sat-karma. If one's activities are meant only for fulfilling one's own desires and do not benefit others, they cannot be called sat-karma. Those who give up sinful activities, which harm the performer and others, and engage in activities that are not meant for the pleasure of Lord Visnu are actually dead, although

breathing.

Everyone who is on the platform of fruitive activities should execute his own duties for the purpose of dharma. But if one does not engage in all his religious duties for the purpose of developing renunciation, they simply generate ignorance. When a person becomes overly proud of being situated in the mode of goodness, then he gives up pious activities and again becomes attached to activities in the modes of passion and ignorance. The perfection of knowledge is to destroy ignorance by passion, to destroy passion by goodness, and to become detached from goodness by pure goodness. This state is called nirguna, or transcendental to the material modes of nature. Without attaining the state of nirguna, a life of renunciation nourished by ignorance is as good as death. Therefore a person who has acquired knowledge takes shelter of the service of the Supreme Lord, at whose feet are found all the holy places. In other words, he takes shelter of the activities of bhakti. This is the symptom of real life in a living entity. When one surpasses whimsical, unregulated activities, he comes to the level of regulated, pious activities. When he further advances from pious activities, he comes to the level of knowledge, or renunciation, wherein he gives up activities. When a person loses interest in the paths of karma and jnana, he comes to the path of bhakti, which is the highest development of human consciousness. In the pure devotional path there is no scope for fruitive activities, which are meant for sense gratification, or impersonal knowledge, which is meant for renunciation.

Although the three paths and their practices are different, they appear the same in the eyes of foolish people. The people of India who are engaged in karma-kanda consider every human being under the jurisdiction of karma-kanda like themselves. Until one personally understands the powerful reactions of karma, he cannot avoid glorifying karma and desiring to achieve its fruits. When knowledge is awakened, fruitive activities subside and one's self-realization becomes completely purified, then one can finally identify with the propensity for devotional service. One who misunderstands the path of bhakti as another version of the path of karma considers himself a practitioner of jnana and simply creates anxiety for himself. Yet the activities performed by such jnanis fall more or



less under the category of karma.

Although the self-realization of those who follow the path of bhakti is not actually under the jurisdiction of karma, it appears as such to the eyes of the karmis and jnanis. Respectable persons who are attached to fruitive activities mistakenly consider that the devotees who have taken shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord are on the same platform as themselves and forced to enjoy the fruits of karma. Thanks to their poor fund of knowledge, the jnanis have convinced themselves that the devotees are chained by the laws of karma. Indeed, other than those engaged on the path of bhakti, all people-the karmis, the jnanis, and the whimsical-consider that devotees are forced to enjoy the fruits of karma. But in the pure devotional path this conclusion is actually very weak. Intelligent followers of the above-mentioned three paths will undoubtedly profit in this regard by referring to the innumerable books, life histories of sages, and historical incidents connected with these paths.

Those who have accepted the rulings of the scriptures on karma with unshakable faith and fixed minds are naturally indifferent to the scriptural conclusions of jnana and bhakti spoken by the Upanisads. That is why we have written this present essay to appeal to those who are attached to karma. This present essay will consist of topics related with the realm of karma and its logical analysis. Therefore this chapter is being named Prakrti-jana-kanda, and the next chapter must be named Hari-jana-kanda. In that chapter we will discuss topics concerning the communities of jnanis and hari-janas, who are both beyond the jurisdiction of karma. Since worldly people do not completely reject the statements of literatures that respect the jnana and bhakti scriptures, there will be no fault in quoting herein evidence and arguments from those literatures.

It is an established fact that the descendants of those who were even once known in society as brahmanas are all considered brahmanas. The descendants of those who have once somehow been designated brahmanas-in Satya, Treta, or Dvapara-yugas-have kept their claims to the brahminical designation and authority intact with the help of the twenty Dharma-sastras and social customs. In this regard we can only say that in early times ten samskaras, or purificatory processes, were followed by the brahmanas. Among these, one is the garbhadana

ceremony, which was based on seminal line. It has, however, been changed and perverted in the course of time. According to the opinion of Devala, if the womb is once purified before intercourse then it is not necessary to purify the womb before every pregnancy. He states this as follows:

*sakrc ca samskrta nari sarva-garbhesu samskrta*

"A once-consecrated women is consecrated for all her pregnancies."

The respected smarta Raghunandana Bhattacharya of Bengal was also of the opinion that the samskara need only be performed once. But if this samskara was taken more seriously, then seminal consideration would have been more applicable. In the Mahabharata (Vana-parva 180.31-32) it is stated:

*jatir atra maha-sarpa manusyatve maha-mate*

*sankarat sarva-varnanam duspariksyeti me matih*

*sarve sarvasv apatyani janayanti sada narah*

*van-maithunam atho janma maranam ca samam nrrnam*

"Maharaja Yudhisthira said to Nahusa: O broad-minded, great serpent, because there are persons born from mixed marriages among each of the varnas, it is extremely difficult to determine an individual's caste. This is my opinion. The reason for this is that men of all castes are able to beget children in the women of any caste. Speech, sex, birth, and death are similar for men of all castes."

It is especially difficult to ascertain whether a given person is born from a brahmana, ksatriya, or other caste father. Other than trusting a person's words there is no way to investigate his caste. The caste of those belonging to brahmana and other caste dynasties coming from Lord Brahma and said to be purely descending to the present day cannot be known in truth without definitely validating every person in the line. In his commentary on the above verse, Sri Nilakantha, the commentator on the Mahabharata, quotes from the Vedas as follows:

*na caitad vidmo brahmanah smo vayam abrahmana veti*

"We do not know whether we are brahmanas or non-brahmanas." Such doubts arose in the hearts of the truthful sages.

The qualification of those who take birth in brahmana families but are unable to maintain brahminical qualities and the qualification of their descendants needs to be considered. By immoral activities the qualification and potency based on seminal descent is reduced, and by sinful activities persons become sinners and fall from their positions. The compilers of Dharma-sastras Visnu (93.7-13) and Manu (4.192, 195-200) have stated as follows:

*na vary api prayacchet tu vaidala-vratike dvije*

*na baka-vratike vipre naveda-vidi dharma-vit*

*dharma-dhvaji sada lubdhas chadmiko loka-dambhakah*

*vaidala-vratiko jneyo himsra-sarvabhisandhikah*

*adho-drstir naikrtikah svartha-sadhana-tatparah*

*satho mithya-vinitas ca baka-vrata-paro dvijah*

*ye baka-vratino vipra ye ca marjara-linginah  
te patanty andha-tamisre tena papena karmana  
na dharmasyapadesena papam krtva vratam caret  
vratena papam pracchadya kurvan stri-sudra-dambhanam  
pretyeha cedrso vipro grhyate brahma-vadibhih  
chadmanacaritam yac ca tad vai raksamsi gacchati  
alingi lingi-vesena yo vrttim upajivati  
sa linginam haraty enas tiryag-yonau prajayate*

"Religious-minded persons should not give even a drop of water to the hypocritical son of a brahmana, the follower of the "vow of a cat." One should not give even a drop of water to the son of a brahmana who is either a sinful imposter or ignorant of the Vedas.

"One should know that a dharmadhvaji (who makes a false show of being religious), a person who always desires other's wealth, a duplicitous person, a cheater, an envious person, and a blasphemer is a hypocritical brahmana who follows the `vow of a cat.'

"An imposter brahmana, the follower of the `vow of the duck,' is he who always looks down in order to make a show of humility, who is cruel, and who pretends to be submissive.

"As a result of their sinful activities, those who are hypocrites and imposters go to the hell known as Andha-tamisra.

"Such people make a show of being religious in order to impress women and sudras by pretending that their acts of atonement, which are meant for counteracting their sins, are simply pious vows.

"Such people are condemned in this world and the next by those who are conversant with the Absolute Truth. Vows that are executed with duplicity are simply demoniac.

"If someone accepts the symptoms and occupation of a status for which he is not qualified, he is guilty of breaking the principles of varnasrama, and as a result of those sins he will take birth as an animal."

The Dharma-sastra compiler Visnu (82.3-29) also states:

*hinadhikangan vivarjayet, vikarma-sthams ca, vaidala-vratikan, vrtha-linginah, naksattra-jivinah, devalakams ca, cikitsikan, anudha-putran, tat-putran, bahu-yajinah, grama-yajinah, sudra-yajinah, ayajya-yajinah, tad-yajinah, parva-karan, sucakan, bhrtakadhyapakan, bhrtakadhyapitan, sudranna-pustan, patita-samsargan, anadhiyanan, sandhyopasana-bhrastan, raja-sevakan, nagnan, pitra vivadamanan, pitr-matr-gurv-agni-svadhyaya-tyaginas ceti, brahmanapasada hy ete kathitah pankti-dusakah. etan vivarjayet yatnat sraddha-karmani panditah.*

"One should reject the following brahmanas: those with missing limbs, those with extra limbs, those who behave unjustly, hypocrites, those who falsely accept the signs of some status, professional astrologers, professional priests, physicians, the sons of unmarried women, their sons, worshipers of many gods, priests of the village, priests of the sudras, priests of the untouchables, those who have failed to take their second birth, their priests, performers of religious rites, betrayers, salaried teachers, the students who pay the salaries, those who are nourished by the food of sudras, those who associate with fallen persons, those who are ignorant of the Vedas, those who fail to observe the sandhya rites (chanting the Gayatri mantra), government servants, those who do not wear clothes, those who quarrel with their fathers, and those who reject their father, mother, spiritual master, the sacred fire, or the study of the scriptures. Such persons are considered the worst kinds of brahmanas and are disgraces to their line. Learned persons should

carefully reject these persons while performing the sraddha ceremony for their fathers."

Since brahmanas are also capable of committing any of the nine types of sinful activities-atipataka, mahapataka, anupataka, upapataka, jati-bhramsa-kara, sankari-karana (killing animals), patri-karana, malavaha, and prakirnaka-it is difficult to know how far a brahmana is qualified if he conceals these sins without undergoing atonement. It is true that a brahmana can escape reproach from society if he successfully conceals those sinful activities by which he becomes fallen, but if he does so his truthfulness is ruined and as a result he is degraded. The descendants of such a person will then surely and proudly accept that same sinful way of life.

According to their occupations, there are many types of brahmanas. Atri (364-374) has stated:

*devo munir dvijo raja vaisyah sudro nisadakah  
pasur mleccho 'pi candalo vipra dasa-vidhah smrtah  
sandhyam snanam japam homam devata-nitya-pujanam  
atithim vaisvadevam ca deva-brahmana ucyate  
sake patre phale mule vana-vase sada ratah  
nirato 'raha sraddhe sa vipro munir ucyate  
vedantam pathate nityam sarva-sangam parityajet  
sankhya-yoga-vicara-sthah sa vipro dvija ucyate  
astrahatas ca dhanvanah samgrame sarva-sammukhe  
arambhe nirjita yena sa viprah ksatra ucyate*

*krsi-karma-rato yas ca gavam ca pratipalakah  
vanijya-vyavasayas ca sa vipro vaisya ucyate  
laksa-lavana-sammisra- kusumbha-ksira-sarpisam  
vikreta madhu-mamsanam sa viprah sudra ucyate  
cauras ca taskaras caiva sucako damsakas tatha  
matsya-mamse sada lubdho vipro nisada ucyate  
brahma-tattvam na janati brahma-sutrena garvitah  
tenaiva sa ca papena viprah pasur udahrtah  
vapi-kupa-tadaganam aramasya sarahsu ca  
nihsankam rodhakas caiva sa vipro mleccha ucyate  
kriya-hinas ca murkhas ca sarva-dharma-vivarjitah  
nirdayah sarva-bhutesu vipras candala ucyate*

"There are ten kinds of brahmanas mentioned in the scriptures-devas, munis, dvijas, rajas, vaisyas, sudras, nisadas, pasus, mlecchas, and candalas.

"One who regularly bathes, chants japa, performs fire sacrifices, daily worships the demigods, observes the sandhya rites, honors his guests, and worships the fire-god is a deva-brahmana.

"One who always lives in the forest, eats only spinach, leaves, fruits, and roots, and regularly performs the sraddha rites is called a muni-brahmana.

"One who gives up all association and spends all his time reading Vedanta and studying Sankhya-yoga is called a dvija-vipra.

"One who publicly attacks opponents who confront him with weapons and defeats them with his own weapons is called a ksatra-vipra.

"One who likes to cultivate the land, protect cows and other animals, or accept the profession of trade and commerce is called a vaisya-vipra.

"One who sells varnish, salt, safflower oil, milk, honey, or meat is called a sudra-vipra.

"One who is a thief or a rogue, who gives bad counsel, who is a betrayer, who bites with his harsh words, and who is always greedy to eat fish and meat is called a nisada-brahmana.

"One who proudly advertises himself as a sanctified brahmana but is ignorant of the Absolute Truth is because of this sin called a pasu-vipra.

"One who prevents others from using ponds, wells, lakes, or gardens is called a mleccha-vipra.

"One who is devoid of pious activities, who is a fool, completely irreligious, and merciless to all living entities is called a candala-brahmana."

Apart from these ten kinds of brahmanas, Atri Mahasaya (376-379) also describes:

*iyotir-vido hy atharvanah kira-paurana-pathakah*

*avikas citrakaras ca vaidyo naksatra-pathakah*

*catur vipra na puhyante brhaspati-sama yadi*

*magadho mathuras caiva kapatah kauta-kamalau*

*panca vipra na puhyante brhaspati-sama yadi*

*yajne hi phala-hanih syat tasmāt tan parivarjayet*



"There are three types of brahmanas-those who know astrology, those who know the Atharva Veda, and those who recite the Puranas like parrots.

"Goat traders, painters, physicians, and astrologers-these four kinds of brahmanas never become worshipable, even if they are as learned as Brhaspati,.

"Magadhas, Mathuras, Kapatas, Kautas, and Kamalas-these five kinds of brahmanas never become worshipable, even if they are as learned as Brhaspati.

"Such brahmanas will spoil the results one's sacrifice, so they should be rejected."

In addition to this, Atri (287) also says:

*satham ca brahmanam hatva sudra-hatya-vratam caret*

"If one kills a deceitful brahmana he should perform the same atonement as prescribed for killing a sudra." According to Atri, a compiler of the Dharma-sastras, besides these above-mentioned twenty-three types of brahmanas, there is one other kind. He says as follows (Atri 375):

*vedair vihinās ca pathanti sastram*

*sastrena hinas ca purana-pathah*

*purana-hinah krsino bhavanti*

*bhrastas tato bhagavata bhavanti*

If a brahmana is unable to extract any benefit from his hard studies of the Vedic literatures, he begins to study the Dharma-sastras. If he is unable to abstract any benefit from studying the Dharma-sastras, he becomes a reciter of the Puranas. If he fails to get any benefit from reciting the Puranas, he considers that it is better to earn his livelihood by farming. In other words, such people consider that studying the Vedic literatures, the Dharma-sastras, or the Puranas is simply meant for earning one's livelihood; they see no other purpose in these activities. When such brahmanas are unsuited for all these engagements, they even take to farming. When they cannot be successful even in reciting Puranas, they decide that farming is the best occupation for them. And when due to incompetence and lack of skills they fail to fill their bellies even by farming, they become spiritual masters of the Vaisnavas, accumulate wealth, and advertise themselves as great devotees, establishing this as their means of livelihood.

In this way, including this pseudo-devotee brahmana, there are twenty-four varieties of brahmanas described by the Dharma-sastra compiler Atri Mahasaya. Manu (2.157-158, 168, 172, and 4.245, 255) has stated:

*yatha kastha-mayo hasti    yatha carma-mayo mrgah*

*yas ca vipro 'nadhiyanas    trayas te nama bibhrati*

*yatha sandho 'phalah strisu    yatha gaur gavi caphala*

*yatha cajne 'phalam danam    tatha vipro 'nrdho 'phalah*

*yo 'nadhitya dvijo vedam    anyatra kurute sramam*

*sa jivan eva sudratvam    asu gacchati sanvayah*

*sudrena hi samas tavad    yavad vede na jayate*

*uttamanuttaman gacchan    hinan hinams ca varjayan*

*brahmanah sresthatam eti pratyavayena sudratam*

*yo 'nyatha santam atmanam anyatha satsu bhasate*

*sa papa-krt-tamo loke stena atmapaharakah*

"A vipra who does not study the Vedas is similar to a wooden elephant or a deer made of skin, which are an elephant or deer only in name but do not effectively function as such.

"As a eunuch is of no use to women and a cow cannot be impregnated by another cow, giving charity to a foolish brahmana who does not study the Vedas yields no result.

"One who in his lifetime does not endeavor to study the Vedas but labors hard in other pursuits quickly becomes a sudra along with his family.

"One should know that until a brahmana is qualified in the Vedas, he is on the same level as a sudra.

"If a brahmana disassociates himself from lower caste people and associates only with higher caste people, he attains greatness. If he does the opposite, he becomes a sudra.

"A person with a particular nature who claims to be different when coming before a sadhu is the topmost sinner, a cheater of himself, and a thief."

In the Anusasana-parva, Chapter 143, of the Mahabharata it is stated:

*guru-talpi guru-drohi guru-kutsa-ratis sa yah*

*brahma-vic capi patati brahmano brahma-yonitah*

"One who has sex with the wife of his spiritual master, one who is

envious of his spiritual master, one who habitually criticizes his spiritual master such a brahmana, even if he knows the Absolute Truth, falls from his position."

*sruti-smrti ubhe netre vipranam parikirtite*

*ekena vikalah kano dvabhyam andhah prakirtitah*

"The sruti and smrti scriptures are the two eyes of the brahmanas. Lacking one of them, a brahmana is half blind, and deprived of both he is considered completely blind."

It is stated in the Kurma Purana:

*yo 'nyatra kurute yatnam anadhitya srutim dvijah*

*sa sammudho na sambhasyo veda-bahyo dvijatibhih*

*na veda-patha-matrena santusyed esa vai dvijah*

*yathoktacara-hinas tu panke gaur iva sidati*

*yo 'dhitya vidhi-vad vedam vedartham na vicarayet*

*sa candhah sudra-kalpas tu padartham na prapadyate*

*seva sva-vrttir yair ukta na samyak tair udahrtam*

*svacchanda-caritah kva sva vikritasuh kva sevakah*

*pani-krtyatmanah pranam ye vartante dvijadhamah*

*tesam duratmanam annam bhuktvā candrayanam caret*

*nadyac chudrasya vipro 'nnam mohad va yadi kamatah  
sa sudra-yonim vrajati yas tu bhunkte hy anapadi  
go-raksakan vanijakan tatha karuka-silinah  
presyan vardhusikams caiva vipran sudra-vad acaret  
trnam kastham phalam puspam prakasam vai hared budhah  
dharmartham kevalam vipra hy anyatha patito bhavet*

"O brahmanas, one who does not study the Vedas but carefully endeavors for other pursuits is certainly foolish and ostracized from Vedic life. Brahmanas should not speak with such a person.

"A brahmana should not be satisfied merely with studying the Vedas, for if he does not act accordingly he will be as helpless as a cow that has fallen in the mud.

"One should know that a person who has studied the Vedas but does not properly consider their purport is like a blind person or a sudra and will never attain the supreme goal of life.

"Those who describe the occupation of a servant to be like that of a dog are unable to give a proper comparison. How can a freely wandering dog be compared to a sold out servant?

"If one eats food cooked by fallen, sinful brahmanas who have sold themselves to others, then one must atone by observing candrayana.

"A brahmana should never eat food cooked by a sudra. If other than in an emergency one either willingly or mistakenly does eat food cooked by a sudra, then as a result of eating such food he is born as a sudra.

"Those brahmanas who protect cows, engage in trade, become artists, take the occupation of servants, and loan money on interest are no better

than sudras.

"If a brahmana does not accumulate grass, wood, fruits, and flowers for religious purposes, he becomes eligible for falling down as result of such actions."

By seminal consideration, the descendants of a brahmana are also brahmanas-this belief has been generally accepted for a long time. There is no shortage of evidence from the smrtis, Puranas, and histories in support of this belief. Yet by the evidence that we have presented regarding the degradation of brahmanas, the disqualification of brahmanas who commit sinful activities, and the uncertainty of who is a real brahmana, every listener will be able to understand how qualified the present day descendants of brahmanas are.

Why should those who are brahmanas by birth but have taken to other occupational duties and not shown any interest in acquiring the characteristics of properly initiated brahmanas be respected? The word bandhu generally means relatives like one's son, but the word brahma-bandhu cannot be simply used for those who are related to brahmanas by birth. Since the word brahma-bandhu has been used in a derogatory way, such descendants of brahmanas have not accepted this designation very proudly. Women, sudras, and brahma-bandhus all belong to a particular category that is inferior to the class of topmost brahmanas. These people have no qualification to study the Vedas. Brahma-bandhus are those who are devoid of brahminical culture, engaged in abominable activities, and brahmanas simply by birth. It is stated in the Chandogya Upanisad:

*asmat kulino 'nanucya brahma-bandhur iva bhavati*

"A brahma-bandhu, or a mere relative of a brahmana, is one who who belongs to our brahmana community but has not studied the Vedas."

Sripada Sankaracarya has commented on this verse as follows: he saumya ananucya anadhitya brahma-bandhur iva bhavatiti brahmanan bandhun vyapadisati, na svayam brahmana-vrtah.-"O beautiful woman, one who has not studied the Vedas is like a mere relative of brahmanas.

He calls the brahmanas his relatives, but he does not have the behavior of a brahmana."

It is stated in the Srimad Bhagavatam (1.4.25):

*stri-sudra-dvijabandhunam trayi na sruti-gocara*

"The Rg, Sama, and Yajur Vedas should not be recited before women, sudras, and dvija-bandhus."

One should neither kill nor award physical punishment to brahma-bandhus. This is confirmed in the following words of the Srimad Bhagavatam (1.7.57):

*esa hi brahma-bandhunam vadho nanyo 'sti daihikah*

Persons who are engaged in fruitive activities are less-intelligent than those who have the nature of either a jnani or a bhakta. The goal of fruitive workers is to attain worldly or heavenly happiness. The majority of people in this world are inclined towards fruitive activities. Only the devotees and jnanis have become liberated from this fruitive mentality. Ordinary people are unable to realize knowledge higher than their mundane experience.

The descriptions of the heavenly planets given in the karma-sastras are for persons who are attached to the material world. Such persons are also familiar with the presence of misery. The prototype misery described in the karma-sastras is that found on the hellish planets. It is a fact that on the strength of their pious and sinful activities less-intelligent, ordinary people who are attached to karma-kanda achieve either heaven or hell in the next life and distinction or atonement in this life.

In order to attract the minds of such persons and entice them to behave in appropriate ways, various flowery exaggerations are found in the instructions of their scriptures. Then again, the condemnations are also exaggerated so that these people will not engage in sinful activities. The fear of misery, dishonor, and condemnation stops many of these people from becoming degraded. In this way, such persons are regulated by required atonements and by hell and other punishments.

The glories, prestige, and prowess of the brahmanas are profusely sung in the scriptures. Similarly, the excellence of brahmanas when they are qualified and their degraded condition when they are disqualified are also found described in the same scriptures. Such principles need to be prescribed for those who are directed by the ideas of relative good and bad. In order to minimize the disappointment of the cripple-minded, incapable, weak, foolish, fearful brahma-bandhus, we can respectfully quote a few statements from the scriptures. The Mahabharata, Vana-parva, states:

*nadhyapanat yajanad va anyasmad va pratigrahat*

*doso bhavati vipranam jvalitagni-sama dvijah*

*durveda va suveda va prakrtah samskrtas tatha*

*brahmana navamantavya bhasmacchanna ivagnayah*

*yatha smasane diptaujah pavako naiva dusyati*

*evam vidvan avidvan va brahmano naiva dusyati*

"Brahmanas are like burning fire; therefore even if they do not study the Vedas, even if they act as priests for those who should not perform Vedic sacrifices, or even if they accept charity from low-class people, they are not at fault.



"Whether brahmanas possess knowledge of the Vedas or are devoid of knowledge of the Vedas, whether they are worldly or have undergone the reformatory processes, they do not deserve to be disrespected, for they are like fire covered by ashes.

"As the bright fire of the funeral pyre is not considered impure, a brahmana, whether foolish or learned, is not faulty." Parasara says:

*yuge yuge ca ye dharmas tatra tatra ca ye dvijah*

*tesam ninda na kartavya yuga-rupa hi te dvijah*

"The predominant religious principles of a particular age are followed by brahmanas (who are twice-born according to those principles) according to the time, therefore such brahmanas should not be condemned."

The purpose of these statements found in the scriptures is to somehow minimize the unfortunate condition of the incapable living entities. But those who fall down from the position of real brahmanas with the help of these statements destroy their religious principles. Brhaspati says:

*kevalam sastram asritya na kartavyo vinirnayah*

*yukti-hina-vicare tu dharma-hanih prajayate*

"One should not conclude that the statements meant to minimize the disappointment of unqualified persons who are unable to follow the real instructions of the Dharma-sastras comprise the actual purport of the scriptures."

The statements of Parasara, the narrations of the Mahabharata, and other such authoritative sources are just like lamps of hope for those whose desires are thwarted in the kingdom of hopelessness. If one

carefully considers, then he will understand that the aim of the scriptures is to minimize the hopelessness of the living entities, encourage them to behave better in the future, uplift the non-brahmanas to the level of brahmanas, and prevent the further degradation of non-brahmanas.

The compilers of the scriptures did not ever intend to block the living entities' path of progress and perfection. That is why the most intelligent Brhaspati Mahasaya has said that one should not ascertain the conclusion by simply reading the scriptures, because if one considers without proper reasoning he becomes irreligious. A compiler of Dharma-sastras, Visnu (71.1), states as follows: *atha kanca navamanyeta*-"Do not disrespect anyone."

A person should not in any way disregard or condemn even the lowest class of men in this world, and what to speak of the brahmanas, who are the highest class. A person who condemns or insults another certainly commits a sin. Even to hide the real truth for the benefit of the world is also a sign of cheating. The Mahabharata, Vana-parva, has established that simplicity is the only identification of a brahmana. Therefore we find that by the influence of this extraordinary quality the ideals of simplicity are found in scriptures that are written by brahmanas. Neutrality is the ornament of the simple-minded brahmanas. A brahmana proves his simplicity by opening his heart and speaking the truth, even if it hampers his own self-interest. Wherever there is a lack of simplicity one should know that there is no question of brahminical culture.

The statements of the Vedas, the practical ritual textbooks, the Dharma-sastras, the Puranas, the Itihasas, the Patalas, and other literatures compiled in a spirit of simplicity by the sages are meant only for the benefit of the people of the world, not for condemning or insulting incapable persons. When neutral, thoughtful persons who follow the authority of these scriptures disclose the real purport of the Dharma-sastras to ignorant, selfish people, then those who try to hamper the prestige of such truthful persons and safeguard their own interests like low-class people by publicly criticizing the sastras and the speaker of the sastras are cowards and violators of religious principles.

If someone blasphemes the Vedas, the ritual textbooks that follow the

Vedic version, the Dharma-sastras, the Puranas, the Tantras, as well as neutral speakers of the truth and think that this will enhance the prestige of degraded persons like themselves, then honest fruitive workers will never approve. Let the brahmanas become purely brahminical, and let the prestige of the brahmanas who have actually become brahminical remain intact forever-this is the intention of the sastras and the speakers of the sastras; they never want to condemn the brahmanas. We are also of this opinion. One should not engage in the sin of criticizing brahmanas like low-class, selfish proponents of argumentative views who hanker after high prestige; rather one should study the following verses of Manu. There is no use of gaining prestige from such people. The Manava-dharma-sastra (2.162-163) says:

*sammanad brahmano nityam uddhijet visad iva*

*amrtasyeva cakanksed avamanasya sarvada*

*sukham hy avamatah sete sukham ca pratibudhyate*

*sukham carati loke 'sminn avamanta vinasyati*

"Throughout his life a brahmana should consider material prestige to be like poison and dishonor to be like nectar.

"After all, if one learns to tolerate dishonor, then his agitation will subside and he will happily sleep, happily wake, and happily move about. The person who insults him will as a result of his sin become embarrassed, and his happiness in this and the next life will be vanquished."

Religious principles stood on four legs in Satya-yuga, on three legs in Treta-yuga, on two legs in Dvapara-yuga, and on only one leg in Kali-yuga.

The brahmanas, who are the priests of these religious principles, also become proportionately degraded. If one ascribes the prestige of a

Satya-yuga brahmana to a Kali-yuga brahmana, the result is simply a distortion of the truth. If one offers a brahmana more respect than he deserves, then the glories of he who offers the respect will increase and the respected brahmana's affection for him will increase. But if a respected brahmana forgets his actual position out of pride, then when he remembers the following statement from the Visnu-yamala he will be agitated and lose sleep at night, as previously confirmed by Manu. When those brahmanas who know the condemnations of the Visnu-yamala hear such things, they should keep their mouths shut. The Yamala says:

*asuddhah sudra-kalpa hi brahmanah kali-sambhavah*

"The brahmanas born in Kali-yuga are impure and no better than sudras." In Kali-yuga, or the age of quarrel, seminal lines are not pure, so those

born as brahmanas are equal to sudras and qualified only in name. Such brahmanas cannot be purified by Vedic rituals. Rather they can be purified by following the Tantras.

Has the king of smrtis, Hari-bhakti-vilasa, been neglected by such persons because the above verse from the Visnu-yamala is quoted in the beginning of its fifth Vilasa? This is the age of Kali, so anything is possible! In the Srimad Bhagavatam (11.7.5) it is stated:

*jano 'bhadra-rucir bhadra bhavisyati kalau yuge*

"O gentle one, the people in Kali-yuga will be addicted to all types of sinful activities."

We have thus discussed seminal considerations regarding persons and time.

Now we are quoting Manu regarding the question of place. The Manusmṛiti (2.17-24) states:

*sarasvatī-drśadvatī deva-nadī yad antaram  
tat deva-nirmītaṁ deśam brahmavartam pracakṣate  
tasmin deśe ya ācarah paramparā-kramagataḥ  
varṇanāṁ santaralanāṁ sa śāśva-ācāra ūcyate  
kuruḥsetram ca matsyaś ca pañcalah surasenakah  
eśa brahmarsī-deśo vai brahmavartad anantarah  
etad-deśa-prasūtya śakāśa āgrajānmanah  
svam svam caritram śikṣeran pṛthivyāṁ sarva-manavaḥ  
pratyag eva prayagac ca madhya-deśaḥ prakīrtitaḥ  
a-samudrat tu vai purvat a-samudrat tu pascimat  
tāyā evantaram gīryāḥ āryavartam vidur budhāḥ  
kṛṣṇa-saras tu caratī mṛga yatra svabhavataḥ  
sa jñeyo yajñīyo deśo mlecchā-deśaś tataḥ parah  
etan dvijātyāyā deśan saṁsṛayeraṁ prayatnataḥ  
śūdras tu yasmin kaśmin va nivased vṛtti-kāśitaḥ*

"The tract of land founded by the demigods between the celestial Sarasvatī and Drśadvatī Rivers is called Brahmavarta.

"The traditional behavior of the people in the various castes and mixed classes of that land is called sad-acara, or proper behavior.

"Kuruksetra, Matsya, Pancala, and Surasena, or Mathura-these four sacred provinces situated in the south of Brahmavarta are called Brahmarsi-desa.

"The people of this world should mold their character after the brahmanas who originally inhabited all these provinces.

"The province west of Prayaga is named Madhya-desa.

"The area between the Himalaya and Vindhya Mountains and stretching from the eastern ocean to the western ocean is called Aryavarta by those who are learned.

"The place where spotted deer naturally wander is suitable for sacrifices. Other places are known as Mleccha-desas, the lands of barbarians.

"Those who are twice-born should endeavor to take shelter of these pure tracts of land. There is no restriction, however, on where a sudra may earn his livelihood.

Therefore brahmanas of places other than where sacrifices are performed are understood to be residents of Mleccha-desas and behaving improperly. In the Srimad Bhagavatam (11.21.8) a mood opposite to that described above is seen in the following words:

*akrsna-saro desanam abrahmanyō 'sucir bhavet*

*krsna-saro 'py asauvira- kīkata samskrterinam*

"Among places, those bereft of the spotted antelope, those devoid of devotion to the brahmanas, those possessing spotted antelopes but bereft of respectable men, provinces like Kikata and places where

cleanliness and purificatory rites are neglected, where meat-eaters are prominent or where the earth is barren, are all considered to be contaminated lands."

Anyway, leaving aside the evidence we have quoted so far from the scriptures regarding seminal brahmanas, we will now discuss the processes mentioned in the sastras by which a person attains the position of an actual brahmana, and who is a fit candidate for becoming a brahmana.

In the Muktikopanisad there is a list of one hundred eight Upanisads, among which, the thirty-eighth is named Vajra-sucikopanisad. It is said that Sri Sankaracarya became famous by composing an elaborate commentary on this Upanisad. In the Vajra-sucikopanisad it is stated:

*yaj jnanad yanti munayo brahmanyam paramadbhutam*

*tat trai-pada-brahma-tattvam aham asmiti cintaye*

*om apyayantv iti santih*

*cit-sad-ananda-rupaya sarva-dhi-vrtti-saksine*

*namo vedanta-vedyaya brahmane 'nanta-rupine*

*om vajra-sucim pravaksyami sastram ajnana-bhedanam*

*dusanam jnana-hinanam bhusanam jnana-caksusam*

*brahma-ksatriya-vaishya-sudra iti catvaro varnas tesam*

*varnanam brahmana eva pradhana iti veda-vacananurupam smrtibhir  
apy uktam.*

*tatra codyam asti ko va brahmano nama. kim jivah kim dehah kim jatih*

*kim*

*jnanam kim karma kim dharmika iti. tatra prathamam jivo brahmana iti cet  
tan na. atitanagataneka-dehanam jivasyaika-rupatvad ekasyapi karma-  
vasad*

*aneka-deha-sambhavat sarva-sariranam jiva-svaikarupatvac ca. tasman  
na*

*jivo brahmana iti. tarhi deho brahmana iti cet tan na*

*a-candaladi-paryantanam manusyanam panca-bhautikatvena  
dehasyaika-rupatvaj*

*jara-marana-dharmadharmadi-samya-darsanad brahmanah sveta-varnah  
ksatriyo*

*rakta-varno vaisyah pita-varnah sudrah krsna-varna iti niyamabhavat.*

*pitradi-sarira-dahane putradinam brahma-hatyadi-dosa-sambhavad ca  
tasman*

*na deho brahmana iti. tarhi jatir brahmana iti cet tan na. tatra*

*jaty-antara-jantusu aneka-jati-sambhava maharsayo bahavah santi.  
rsyasrngo*

*mrgah. kausikah kusat. jambuko jambukat. valmiko valmikat. vyasah*

*kaivarta-kanyayam. sasa-prsthat gautamh. vasisthah urvashyam.  
agastyah*

*kalase jata iti srutatvat. etesam jatya vinapy agre jnana-pratipadita*

*rsayo bahavah santi. tasman na jatir brahmana iti. tarhi jnana brahmana*

*iti cet tan na. ksatriyadayo 'pi paramartha-darsino 'bhiksha bahavah santi.*

*tasman na jnanam brahmana iti. tarhi karma brahmana iti cet tan na.*



*sarvesam praninam prarabdha-sancitagami-karma-sadharma-darsanat*

*karmabhipreritah santah janah kriyah kurvanti. tasma na karma  
brahmana*

*iti. tarhi dharmiko brahmana iti cet tan na. ksatriyadayo hiranya-dataro*

*bahavah santi. tasma na dharmiko brahmana iti. tarhi ko va brahmano  
nama.*

*yah kascid atmanam advitiyam jati-guna-kriya-hinam*

*sad-urmi-sad-bhavety-adi-sarva-dosa-rahitam satya-jnananandananta-  
svarupam*

*svayam nirvikalpam asesam-kalpadharam asesam-bhutanantar-yamitvena  
vartamanam*

*antar bahis cakasa-vad anusyutam akhandananda-svabhavam  
apremeyam*

*anubhavaika-vedyam aparoksataya bhasamanam kara-talamalaka-vat  
saksad*

*aparoksi-krtaya krtarthataya kama-ragadi-dosa-rahitah sama-damadi-  
sampanno*

*bhava-matsrya-trsnasa-mohadi-rahito dambhahankaradibhir asamsprsta-  
ceta*

*vartate. evam ukta-laksano yah sa eva brahmana iti*

*sruti-smrti-puranetihasanam abhiprayah. anyatha hi brahmanatva-siddhir*

*nasty eva. sac-cid-anandam atmanam advitiyam brahma bhavayed  
atmanam*

*sac-cid-anandam brahma bhavayed ity upanisat.*

*om apyayantv iti santih.*

"I meditate on that sac-cid-ananda supreme knowledge, endowed with three features, by which sages attain the wonderful platform of brahminical culture.

"I invoke peace by reciting the mantra beginning, "May You be pleased."

"I offer my respectful obeisances to the Supreme Brahman, who possesses unlimited forms, who is known by the Vedanta, whose form is sac-cid-ananda, and who is the witness of all activities of living intelligence.

"I am now speaking the Vajra-suci-sastra. This knowledge dissipates ignorance, reproaches the ignorant persons, and is the ornament of intelligent persons with vision.

"There are four varnas-brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya, and sudra. According to the statements of the Vedas, the brahmanas are the highest class. This is confirmed by the smrtis as well. Therefore the question now comes: Who is a brahmana? The living entity, the body, the caste, the knowledge, the activities, or the religionist-of these, which is the brahmana? If it is proposed that the living entity is the brahmana, that is not correct. The living entity remains the same in the past, present, or future. Though he receives various types of bodies according to his karma, he remains unchanged. Therefore the living entity is not the brahmana. Then is the body the brahmana? No, it is not. The bodies of human beings down to the candala are all made of the same five gross elements. Therefore birth and death and religion and irreligion equally effect all bodies, and since there is no law that the brahmanas are white, the ksatriyas are red, the vaisyas are yellow, and the sudras are black, the body is therefore not the brhmana. Moreover, when the son of a brahmana burns the body of his dead father, he does not commit the sin of killing a brahmana. Therefore the body is not the brahmana. So, then, is caste the brahmana? No, this is also not the case. Many great sages have been born of other living entities. Rsyasrngas was born from a deer, Kausika was born from kusa grass, Jambuka Rsi was born from a jackal,

Valmiki was born from an ant hill, Vyasadeva was born from a fisherman's daughter, Gautama was born from the back of a rabbit, Vasistha was born from Urvasi, and Agastya was born from a pitcher. Apart from these personalities, there are many other wise persons born from other castes who became sages. Therefore caste is not the brahmana. So, then, is knowledge the brahmana? No, it is not that either. Because many persons, such as some ksatriyas, were very learned and knew the Absolute Truth. Therefore knowledge is also not the brahmana.

Then are activities the brahmana? No, they are not. Because every living entity shares the common nature of having to suffer the matured reactions of his karma that come to him in the future. By karma, human beings are engaged in further karma. Therefore activities are not the brahmana. Then is the religionist the brahmana? No, he is not. Because many ksatriyas give gold in charity. Therefore the religionist is not the brahmana. Then who is the brahmana? Anyone who knows the Self as one; devoid of mundane caste, qualities, and activities; devoid of contamination by the six enemies (Kama, krodha, lobha, moha, mada, and matsarya-lust, anger, greed, illusion, pride, and envy.) and six waves (Soka, moha, ksut, pipasa, jara, and mrtyu-distress, illusion, hunger, thirst, old age, and death.); the personification of transcendental knowledge and bliss; beyond duality, yet the basis of all material dualities; the Supersoul of all living entities; all-pervading inside and outside like the vast sky; endowed with uninterrupted bliss; immeasurable; known only through spiritual realization; and directly self-manifesting-one who directly realizes the Self (as one sees an amlaki fruit in the palm of his hand), who lives always satisfied, devoid of faults like lust and anger, who possesses qualities like peacefulness and self-control, who is devoid of envy, the thirst for material enjoyment, illusion, and other faults, and who is untouched by pride, false ego, and so on-such a person is a brahmana. This is also the opinion of the srutis, smrtis, Itihasas, Puranas, and other scriptures. Otherwise one cannot be a real brahmana.

The Upanisads instruct us that the Supreme Soul is sac-cid-ananda and the Absolute Truth, one without a second." It is stated in the Chandogya Upanisad of the Sama Veda (4th prapathaka, 4th khanda) as follows:

1. satyakamo ha jabalo jabalam mataram amantrayam cakre  
brahmacaryam bhavati vivatsyami. kim gotro 'ham asmiti.

2. sa hainam uvaca. naham etad veda. tata yad gotras tvam asi.

bahv-aham caranti paricarini yauvane tvam alabhe. sa aham etan na  
veda.

yad gotras tvam asi. jabala tu namaham asmi. satyakamo nama tvam  
asi. Sa satyakamo eva jabalo bruvitha iti.

3. sa ha haridrumatam gautamam etya uvaca. brahmacaryam bhagavati  
vatsyamamy upeyam bhagavantam iti.

4. tam hovaca kim gotro nu saumyasiti. sa hovaca. naham etad veda bho  
yad gotro

'ham asmi. aprccham mataram. sama pratyabraid bahv-aham caranti  
paricarini yauvane tvam alabhe. saham etan na veda yad gotras tvam  
asi.

jabala tu nama aham asmi. satyakamo nama tvam asiti. so 'ham  
satyakamah

jabalo 'smi bho iti.

5. tam hovaca na etad abrahmano vivaktum arhati. samidham saumya  
ahara upayitva nesye. na satyad aga iti.

"Once Satyakama, the son of Jabala, asked his mother, 'I want to live as  
a brahmacari. Which dynasty do I belong to?' In answer, Jabala told  
Satyakama, 'My son, I do not know which dynasty you belong to; in my  
youth I served as a maidservant in various places and at that time begot  
you as my son. Therefore I don't know which gotra you belong to. My  
name is Jabala and your name is Satyakama. Therefore you should say  
that you are Satyakama Jabala.' Thereafter Satyakama Jabala

approached Haridrumata Gautama and said, 'I wish to live with you as a brahmacari.' Gautama inquired, 'O gentle one, which dynasty do you belong to?' Satyakama replied, 'I do not know which dynasty I belong to. I asked my mother and she said, "I begot you as my son when I was wandering in my youth as a maidservant. Therefore I do not know which dynasty you belong to. My name is Jabala, and your name is Satyakama." So I am Satyakama Jabala.' Gautama then said to him, 'My dear son, no one other than a brahmana can speak such truth that you have spoken. Therefore you are a brahmana, and I accept you. O gentle one, go bring wood for sacrifice.' Jabala replied, 'I am going right now to bring wood.' Gautama said, 'Never divert from the truth.'"

In the Mahabharata (Santi-parva, Moksa-dharma, Chapter 188) our first evidence is given as follows:

*bharadvaja uvaca*

*jangamanam asankhyeyah sthavaranam ca jatayah*

*tesam vividha-varnanam kuto varna-viniscayah*

*bhrgur uvaca*

*na viseso 'sti varnanam sarva-brahmam idam jagat*

*brahmana purva-srstam hi karmabhir varnatam gatam*

*himsanrta-priya lubdhah sarva-karmopajivinah*

*krsnah sauca-paribhrastas te dvijah sudratam gatah*

"Bharadvaja said: There are innumerable categories of animate and inanimate living entities. How can one determine their various varnas?"

"Bhrgu replied: There are no real differences among varnas. When

Brahma first created the universe, it was inhabited only by brahmanas. Later on, as a result of their activities, people attained the designations of different varnas.

"When the brahmanas commit violence, speak lies, become greedy, earn their livelihood by any and all activities, lose their purity by sinful activities, then they become degraded into sudras."

In the Santi-parva, Chapter 189, our second evidence is given as follows:

*bharadvaja uvaca*

*brahmanah kena bhavati ksatriyo va dvijottama*

*vaisyah sudras ca viparse tad bruhi vadatam vara*

*bhrgur uvaca*

*jata-karmadibhir yas tu samskaraih samskrtah suci*

*vedadhyayana-sampannah satsu karmasv avasthitah*

*saucacara-sthitah samyag vighasasi guru-priyah*

*nitya-vrati satya-parah sa vai brahmana ucyate*

*satya-danam athadroha anrsamsyam trapa ghrna*

*tapas ca drsyate yatra sa brahmana iti smrtah*

*sarva-bhaksa-ratir nityam sarva-dharma-karo 'sucih*

*tyakta-vedas tv anacarah sa vai sudra iti smrtah*

*sudre caitad bhavel laksyam dvije tac ca na vidyate*

*na vai sudro bhavec chudro brahmano brahmano na ca*

"Bharadvaja said: O best of the brahmanas, O sage among the twice-born, O best of eloquent speakers, please explain how one becomes a brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya, or sudra."

"Bhrgu replied: A person who has been purified by the reformatory processes like jata-karma, or name-giving ceremony, who is clean, devoted to studying the Vedas, expert in the six occupations like worship and teaching worship, situated in pure conduct, eating the remnants of his spiritual master, dear to the spiritual master, regularly engaged in performing vows, and fixed in truthfulness is considered a brahmana. A human being who is truthful, charitable, shy, not hateful, austere, not vengeful, and not cruel is a brahmana. One who is attached to eating all kinds of foods and performing all kinds of activities, who is impure, deviant from the principles of Vedic culture, and ill-behaved is known as a sudra. If the symptoms of a brahmana are found in a sudra and if the symptoms of a sudra are found in a brahmana, then the sudra should not be called a sudra and the brahmana should not be called a brahmana."

Our third evidence is given in the Vana-parva, Chapter 211, as follows:

*sudra-yonau hi jatasya sad-gunanupatisthatah*

*vaisyatvam labhate brahman ksatriyatvam tathaiva ca*

*arjave vartamanasya brahmanyam abhijayate*

"O brahmana, if a person is born in the family of a sudra and possesses good qualities, he becomes a vaisya or a ksatriya. And if he possesses the quality of simplicity, he is a brahmana."

Our fourth evidence is stated in the Vana-parva, Chapter 215:

*brahmano vyadhaya*

*sampratam ca mato me 'si brahmano natra samsayah*

*brahmanah pataniyesu vartamano vikarmasu*

*dambhiko duskrtah prajnah sudrena sadrso bhavet*

*yas tu sudro dame satye darme ca satatotthitah*

*tam brahmanam aham manye vrttena hi bhaved dvijah*

"The brahmana told the pious hunter: In my opinion you are still a brahmana. There is no doubt about it. After all, a brahmana who is proud and engaged in various sinful activities that result in his falling down into the degradation of being contaminated by impure karma is equal to a sudra. And I consider a sudra who is self-controlled, truthful, and always enthusiastic about executing his religious duties to be a brahmana.

Indeed, the only criteria for being a brahmana is to possess pure characteristics."

Our fifth evidence is given in the Santi-parva, Chapter 318, as follows:

*sarve varna brahmana brahmajas ca*

*brahmasyato brahmanah samprasutah*

*bahubhyam vai ksatriyah samprasutah*

*nabhyam vaisyah padatas capi sudrah*

*sarve varna nanyatha veditavyah*

*tat-stho brahma tasthivams caparo yas*



*tasmai nityam moksam ahur narendra*

"Persons of all varnas are brahmanas, because they are all born from Lord Brahma. The brahmanas were born from the mouth of Brahma, the ksatriyas were born from his arms, the vaisyas were born from his navel, and the sudras were born from his legs. Do not consider the varnas in another way.

One who is fixed in knowledge is a brahmana. Therefore, O king, this moksa-sastra was spoken for the benefit of those brahmanas and ksatriyas who have attained knowledge. This is the opinion of ancient scholars."

In his commentary on these verses Sri Nilakantha has stated: tat-stho jnana-nistho yah sa eva brahma brahmanah. aparokṣaḥ ksatriyadīpi tathā tathīvan.-"Persons who are born from Brahma and fixed in knowledge are called brahmanas. The other castes like ksatriyas were also born from Brahma."

Our sixth evidence is stated in the Vana-parva, Chapter 180, as follows:

*sarpa uvaca*

*brahmanah ko bhaved rajan vedyam kim ca yudhisthira*

*bravihi ati-matim tvam hi vakyair anumimimahe*

*yudhisthira uvaca*

*satyam danam ksama-silam anrsamsyam tapo ghrna*

*drsyante yatra nagendra sa brahmana iti smrtah*

*sarpa uvaca*

*sudresv api ca satyam ca danam akrodha eva ca*

*anrsamsyam ahimsa ca ghrna caiva yudhisthira*

*yudhisthira uvaca*

*sudre tu yad bhavel laksma dvije tac ca na vidyate*

*na vai sudro bhavec chudro brahmano na ca brahmanah*

*yatraital laksyate sarpa vrttam sa brahmanah smrtah*

*yatraitan na bhavet sarpa tam sudram iti nirdiset*

"The snake asked: O Maharaja Yudhisthira, who is a brahmana, and what is the object of knowledge? You are very intelligent, therefore I will be enlightened by your statement.

"Maharaja Yudhisthira replied: A person who possesses truthfulness, charity, forgiveness, sobriety, gentleness, austerity, and lack of hatred is called a brahmana.

"The snake said: Sudras also possess truthfulness, charity, freedom from anger, nonviolence, noneviousness, and lack of hatred.

"Maharaja Yudhisthira replied to this: If such symptoms are found in a sudra he should never be called a sudra, just as a brahmana is not a brahmana if he does not possess these qualities.

"O snake, only a person who is endowed with the characteristics of a brahmana can be called a brahmana, otherwise he is a sudra."

By these six separate evidences quoted from the Mahabharata, it is clearly understood that one should be accepted without hesitation as a savitrya or daiksya (Vedic or spiritually initiated) brahmana if he

possesses simplicity and the nature of a brahmana, regardless of his birth. Those who are brahmanas by birth are very orthodox in regards to their eating and sexual relations. But these principles are not obstacles for the savitrya brahmanas. We do not find any obstacles in the smooth performance of such persons' spiritual brahminical duties. All sastric evidence that is unfavorable to the ascertainment of who is a brahmana on the basis of seminal descent are reasonable and unrefutable by argument. The Dharma-sastras that support the seminal brahmanas do not contradict Vyasadeva. The evidence in Sri Mahabharata, however, is more important and more respected than that of the Dharma-sastras. The evidence of the Dharma-sastras is only theoretical, while the evidence in the Mahabharata is practice. Those who oppose this principle will simply confirm themselves as evil doers of this world.

Just as the Vedas and the Mahabharata have confirmed that a person who is not a seminal brahmana yet possesses the qualities of a brahmana is accepted as a qualified brahmana, the Srimad Bhagavatam, which is the crest jewel of all scriptures, the ripened fruit of the Vedic tree, and the literature for perfect swanlike men, bravely and neutrally supports this doctrine.

In the Srimad Bhagavatam (7.11.21-24, 35) it is described:

*samo damas tapah saucam    santosah ksantir arjavam*

*jnanam dayacyutatmatvam    satyam ca brahma-laksanam*

"The symptoms of a brahmana are control of the mind, control of the senses, austerity and penance, cleanliness, satisfaction, forgiveness, simplicity, knowledge, mercy, truthfulness, and complete surrender to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

*sauryam viryam dhrtis tejas    tyagas catma-jayah ksama*

*brahmanyata prasadas ca satyam ca ksatra-laksanam*

"To be influential in battle, unconquerable, patient, challenging and charitable, to control the bodily necessities, to be forgiving, to be attached to the brahminical nature and to be always jolly and truthful-these are the symptoms of the ksatriya.

*deva-gurv-acyute bhaktis tri-varga-pariposanam*

*astikyam udyamo nityam naipunyam vaisya-laksanam*

"Being always devoted to the demigods, the spiritual master and the Supreme Lord, Visnu; endeavoring for advancement in religious principles, economic development and sense gratification [dharma, artha and kama]; believing in the words of the spiritual master and scripture; and always endeavoring with expertise in earning money-these are the symptoms of the vaisya.

*sudrasya sannatih saucam seva svaminy amayaya*

*amantra-yajno hy asteyam satyam go-vipra-raksanam*

"Offering obeisances to the higher sections of society [the brahmanas, ksatriyas and vaisyas], being always very clean, being free from duplicity, serving one's master, performing sacrifices without uttering mantras, not stealing, always speaking the truth and giving all protection to the cows and brahmanas-these are the symptoms of the sudra."

*yasya yal laksanam proktam pumso varnabhivyanjakam*

*yad anyatrapi drsyeta tat tenaiva vinirdiset*

"If one shows the symptoms of being a brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya or sudra, as described above, even if he has appeared in a different class, he should be accepted according to those symptoms of classification."

Although we have collected six different evidences from the Mahabharata regarding the eligibility for a person born from any of the varnas to become a qualified brahmana and we have also seen verses from the Srimad Bhagavatam that corroborate this evidence, we will nevertheless quote the conversation between Uma and Mahesvara from the Mahabharata

(Anusasana-parva 163.5, 8, 26, 46, 48, 51, and 59) in order to further strengthen this evidence.

## **Special Evidence**

*sri-uma uvaca*

*etan me samsayam deva vada bhuta-pate 'nagha*

*trayo varnah prakrtyeha katham brahmanyam apnuyuh*

*mahesvara uvaca*

*sthito brahmana-dharmena brahmanyam upajivati*

*ksatriyo vatha vaisyo va brahma-bhuyah sa gacchati*

ebhis tu karmabhir devi    subhair acaritais tatha  
sudro brahmanatam yati    vaisyah ksatriyatam vrajet  
etaih karma-phalair devi    nyuna-jati-kulodbhavah  
sudro 'py agama-sampanno    dvijo bhavati samskrtah  
karmabhih sucibhir devi    suddhatma vijitendriyah  
sudro 'pi dvija-vat sevyā    iti brahmabravit svayam  
svabhavah karma ca subham    yatra sudro 'pi tisthati  
visistah sa dvijater vai    vijneya iti me matih  
na yonir napi samskaro    na srutam na ca santatih  
karanani dvijatvasya    vrttam eva tu karanam  
sarvo 'yam brahmano loke    vrttena tu vidhiyate  
vrtte sthitas tu sudro 'pi    brahmanatvam niyacchati  
etat te guhyam akhyatam    yatha sudro bhaved dvijah  
brahmano va cyuto dharmad    yatha sudratvam apnuyat

"Uma said: O Lord, O sinless master of the living entities, I have some doubt about how members of the three castes-ksatriya, vaisya, and sudra-will attain through their own nature the platform of brahmanas.

"Mahesvara replied: If ksatriyas or vaisyas become situated in the behavior of brahmanas and spend their lives in the occupations of brahmanas, then such persons can attain the position of brahmanas.

"O goddess, by the same procedure a sudra can become a brahmana and a vaisya can become a ksatriya.

"By the results of these activities and by becoming an adherent of the agama scriptures, or in other words, by taking initiation through the pancaratrika system, then a low-born sudra also becomes a brahmana.

"O goddess, Lord Brahma has personally declared that by performing pure activities, a self-controlled sudra is fit to be served just like a brahmana.

"In my opinion, if pious activities and good character are found in a sudra, it should be understood that he is better than a brahmana.

"Birth, purificatory processes, study of the Vedas, and good birth are not the criterion for being a brahmana. The only criterion is one's behavior.

"A person is born as a brahmana in this world simply as a result of his nature. A sudra situated in the profession of a brahmana also becomes a brahmana.

"I have thus explained to you the secret of how a person who is born as a sudra becomes a brahmana and how by deviating from his occupational duties a person born in the family of a brahmana becomes a sudra."

In the Brahma-sutras (1.3.37) it is stated: tad-abhava-nirdharane ca pravrtteh-"Whether a person belongs to a varna other than that of his birth may be ascertained by considering his qualities."

Purnaprajna Anandatirtha (Sri Madhvacarya) has written in his commentary on the story of Jabala in the Chandogya Upanisad as follows:

*naham etad veda bho yad gotro 'ham asmiti satya-vacanena  
satyakamasya sudratvabhava-nirdharane haridrumatasya na etad  
abrahmano vivaktum arhatiti tat-samskare pravrttes ca.*

"By Satyakama's truthful statement, 'I do not know, sir, which dynasty I

belong to,' Haridrumata ascertained that he was not a sudra and therefore said, 'A non-brahmana cannot speak like this.' He then proceeded to perform the purificatory rituals for him."

Although there was no evidence that Satyakama Jabala was a brahmana by birth, Gautama Rsi accepted him as a brahmana upon hearing his truthful words.

In his commentary on the Chandogya Upanisad, Madhvacarya quotes the following verse from the Sama-samhita:

*arjavam brahmane saksat sudro'narjava-laksanah*

*gautamas tv iti vijnaya satyakamam upanayat*

"A brahmana possesses the quality of simplicity, and a sudra possesses the quality of crookedness. Knowing this fact, Gautama awarded sacred thread initiation to Satyakama and made him a first-class brahmana."

Furthermore, Tribandhana was born in the family of the ksatriya king Mandhata. Although his son, Trisanku, was born as a ksatriya, he became a candala. This is confirmed in the Srimad Bhagavatam (9.7.5) as follows:

*tasya satyavratah putras trisankur iti visrutah*

*praptas candalatam sapad guroh kausika-tejasa*

"The son of Tribandhana was Satyavrata, who is celebrated by the name Trisanku. Because he kidnapped the daughter of a brahmana when she was being married, his father cursed him to become a candala, lower



than a sudra."

In the narration regarding Pautrayana in the Chandogya Upanisad (4<sup>th</sup> prapathaka, 2nd khanda) it is stated that although he was not born in the family of a sudra, he became a sudra.

In the Brahma-sutras (1.3.34) it is stated:

*sug asya tad-anadara-sravanat tad-adraavanat sucyate hi.*

"When he [Janasruti Maharaja] heard words of condemnation against himself, he became overwhelmed with sorrow and immediately went to take revenge."

In the Purnaprajna school of philosophy, Sri Madhvacarya has written in his commentary on this sutra of Vedanta:

*nasau pautrayanah sudrah sucad*

*dravanam eva hi sudratvam. kambara enam etat santam ity-anadara-sravanat.*

*sahasam jihana eva ksattaram uvaceti sucyate hi.*

"King Pautrayana was not actually a sudra. One is a sudra if he is overly affected by lamentation. When Pautrayana heard the disrespectful words, 'This person is a spotted deer,' he immediately wanted to retaliate and reply accordingly to the chariot driver. This implies that he was like a sudra."

In his commentary on the Chandogya Upanisad, Sri Anandatirtha

Madhvacarya has written:

*suca dravanac chudrah raja paturayanah sokac chudreti muninoditah  
prana-vidyam avapyasmat param dharmam avaptavan iti padme*

"One who is overwhelmed by lamentation is a sudra. In the Padma Purana it is described that although Pautrayana Maharaja was a ksatriya, he became overwhelmed with lamentation and thus was declared a sudra by Raikva Muni.

Later the king attained the goal of life by learning the confidential meditation on prana from Raikva Muni." Again [from the Brahma-sutras (1.3.35)] it is stated:

*ksatriyatvavagates cottaratra caitrarathena lingat.*

"As previously understood from the concluding words of this incident and by using the word caitraratha, it is understood that Janasruti was a ksatriya."

In his commentary on this sutra, Sri Madhvacarya has written:

*ayam asvatari-ratha iti citraratha-sambandhitvena lingena pautrayanasya  
ksatriyatvavagates ca rathas tv asvatari-yuktas catra ity abhidhiyata iti  
brahme. yatra vedo rathas tatra na vedo yatra no ratha iti ca brahma-  
vaivarte*

"It is stated in the Brahma Purana that because Maharaja Pautrayana had a mule-driven chariot it is understood he was a ksatriya. The chariot was called a citraratha because it was pulled by mules. According to the Brahma-vaivarta Purana wherever the Vedas are present a chariot is also, and wherever the Vedas are not present, a chariot will not be present."

Because the citraratha was present, he is considered a ksatriya. From all these Vedic narrations it is understood that a person's varna is known by his symptoms.

Prsadhra, the son of Manu, was the only ksatriya to become a sudra because of unknowingly killing a cow. As stated in the Srimad Bhagavatam (9.2.9):

*na ksatra-bandhuh sudras tvam karmana bhavitamuna*

*evam saptas tu guruna pratyagrhnat krtanjalih*

"In your next life you shall not be able to become a ksatriya. Instead, you shall take birth as a sudra because of killing the cow.' When the hero Prsadhra was thus cursed by his spiritual master, he accepted the curse with folded hands."

Dista was a son of Manu. The son of the ksatriya Dista was Nabhaga, who became a vaisya. As stated in the Srimad Bhagavatam (9.2.23):

*nabhago dista-putro 'nyah karmana vaisyatam gatah*

"Dista had a son by the name Nabhaga. This Nabhaga, who was different from the Nabhaga described later, became a vaisya by occupational

duty."

Moreover, his descendants gradually became ksatriyas. As described in the Hari-vamsa (10.30):

*nabhagorista-putras ca ksatriya vaisyatam gatah*

"Nabhaga and the sons of Arista were ksatriyas but they became vaisyas."

One's varna is currently ascertained only by seminal consideration. But the ancient and rational system approved of by scriptures is to ascertain one's varna by considering one's symptoms. This is not the new imagination of selfish persons.

In his commentary on the Mahabharata (Vana-parva 180.25, 26), Sri Nilakantha clearly says:

*sudra-laksma kamadikam na brahmane 'sti. napi brahmana-laksma samadikam sudre 'sti. sudro 'pi samady-upeto brahmana eva. brahmano 'pi kamady-upetah sudra eva.*

"The symptoms of a sudra, such as lust, are not present in a brahmana. Similarly the symptoms of a brahmana, such as peacefulness, are not present in a sudra. A sudra who possesses the quality of peacefulness is certainly a brahmana, and a brahmana who possesses the quality of lust is certainly a sudra."

In his commentary on Srimad Bhagavatam (7.11.35), Srila Sridhara Svamipada has clarified the above statement as follows:

*samadibhir eva brahmanadi-vyavaharo mukhyo na jati-matrad ity aha  
yasyeti-yad yadi anyatra varnantare 'pi drsyeta tad varnantaram tenaiva  
laksana-nimitenaiva varnena vinirdiset na tu jati-nimitenety arthah*

"The brahmanas' main characteristics are qualities such as peacefulness, not birth. If these main characteristics are seen in persons other than those born as brahmanas, then such persons should be considered brahmanas. They should not be considered according to their caste by birth."

Many persons who were not born in brahmana families have become brahmanas by proper initiation. Innumerable incidents illustrating this fact are known to those who read Indian history. After such persons became qualified and initiated brahmanas, their descendants became known as brahmanas by virtue of their birth. Today the whole of India is filled with such descendants of brahmanas. Even though one became a qualified and properly initiated brahmana, he was still considered a brahmana simply on the basis of his birth. But since nowadays the social system is deformed, such qualified, initiated, seminal brahmanas are rarely found.

We heard that in Varanasi there was a learned, unrivaled sannyasi whose name was respected by educated people throughout India. He bestowed brahmana initiation on one of his disciples in whom he saw brahminical qualities. When speaking the name of his gurudeva, this disciple would announce that he was awarded the purified status of a brahmana by the power of the sacred thread initiation.

We are now presenting an incomplete list of intellectuals who were born in families lower than brahmana but who were considered brahmanas on the strength of their qualifications and thus conferred the status of brahmana on their descendants.

Gadhi was the son of Kusika of the Candra dynasty. He was the king of Kanyakubja, and his son, Visvamitra, although born a ksatriya, became a

brahmana on the strength of his austerities.

In the Mahabharata (Adi-parva, Chapter 174) it is stated:

*ksatriyo 'ham bhavan vipras tapah-svadhyaya-sadhanah  
sva-dharmam na prahasyami nesyami ca balena gam  
dhig balam ksatriya-balam brahma-tejo-balam balam  
balabalam viniscitya tapa eva param balam  
tatapa sarvan diptaujah brahmanatvam avaptavan*

"Visvamitra said to Vasistha: You are a brahmana, endowed with the qualities of austerity and Vedic study. I am a ksatriya, so on the basis of my nature I will forcibly take this cow, Nandini.

"Later, when Visvamitra was defeated, he declared that the strength of the ksatriyas was inferior to the strength of the brahmanas. He thus decided that the performance of austerities endowed one with superior strength.

"The greatly effulgent Visvamitra thus performed all kinds of austerities and attained the position of a brahmana."

In the Mahabharata (Anusasana-parva, Chapter 30) there is the following description of how the ksatriya-born Maharaja Vitahavya became a brahmana:

*evam vipratvam agamad vitahavyo naradhipah  
bhrgoh prasada rajendra ksatriyah ksatriyarsabha*

tasya grtsamadah putro rupenendra ivaparah  
sa brahmacari viprarsih sriman grtsamado 'bhavat  
putro grtsamadasyapi suceta abhavad dvija  
varcah (sutejasah) sucetasah putro vihavyas tasya catmajah  
vihavyasya tu putras tu vitatyas tasya catmajah  
vitatyasya sutah satyah santah satyasya catmajah  
sravas tasya sutas carsih sravasas cabhavat tamah  
tamasas ca prakaso 'bhut tanayo dvija-sattamah  
prakasasya ca vagindro babhuva jayatam varah  
tasyatmajas ca pramitir veda-vedanga-paragah  
ghrtacyam tasya putras tu ruru-namodapadyata  
pramadvarayan tu ruroh putrah samudapadyata  
sunako nama viprarsir yasya putro 'tha saunakah

"This is how Maharaja Vitahavya attained the position of a brahmana: O best of the ksatriya kings, although Vitahavya was a ksatriya by birth, by the mercy of Bhrgu he became a brahmana. His son Grtsamada was equal in beauty to Indra. He became a brahmacari and a brahmana sage. Suceta, the son of Grtsamada, also became a brahmana. The son of Suceta was Varca, whose son was Vihavya. The son of Vihavya was Vitatya, and his son was Satya. The son of Satya was Santa, whose son was Rsisrava. The son of Rsisrava was Tama, and his son, Prakasa, was the best of the brahmanas. The son of Prakasa was Vagindra, whose son, Pramiti, was learned in the Vedas and Vedic supplements. Pramiti begot Ruru in the womb of Ghrtaci. In his wife, Pramadvara, Ruru begot

a son named Sunaka, who became a viprarsi. The son of Sunaka was Saunaka Rsi." This is the dynasty of Grtsamada. The dynasty of Vitahavya is found in the Srimad Bhagavatam (9.13.1, 12-27) as follows:

*nimir iksvaku-tanayo vasistham avrtartvijam  
deham mamanthuh sma nimeh kumarah samajayata  
janmana janakah so 'bhud vaidehas tu videha-jah  
tasmad udavasus tasya putro 'bhun nandivardhanah  
tatah suketus tasyapi devarato mahi-pate  
tasmad brhadrathas tasya mahaviryah sudhrt-pita  
sudhrter dhrstaketur vai haryasvo 'tha marus tatah  
maroh pratipakas tasmaj jatah krtaratho yatah  
devamidhas tasya putro visruto 'tha mahadhrtih  
krtiratas tatas tasman maharoma ca tat-sutah  
svarnaroma sutas tasya hrasvaroma vyajayata  
tatah siradhvajo jajne yajnartham karsato mahim  
kusadhvajas tasya bhrata tato dharmadhvajo nrpah  
dharmadhvajasya dvau putrau krtadhvaja-mitadhvajau  
krtadhvajat kesidhvajah khandikyas tu mitadhvajat  
krtadhvaja-suto rajann atma-vidya-visaradah  
bhanumams tasya putro 'bhuc chatadyumnas tu tat-sutah*



*sucis tu tanayas tasmāt sanadvajah suto 'bhavat  
urjaketuh sanadvajad ajo 'tha purujit sutah  
aristanemis tasyapi srutayus tat suparsvakah  
tatas citraratho yasya ksemadhir mithiladhipah  
tasmāt samarathas tasya sutah satyarathas tatah  
asid upagurus tasmad upagupto 'gni-sambhavaḥ  
vasvananto 'tha tat-putro yuyudho yat subhasanaḥ  
srutas tato jayas tasmad vijayo 'smad rtah sutah  
sunakas tat-suto jajne vitahavyo dhṛtis tatah  
bahulasvo dhṛtes tasya kṛtir asya mahavasi  
ete vai maithila rajann atma-vidya-visaradaḥ  
yogesvara-prasadena dvandvair mukta grhesv api*

The family descent of Vitahavya:

(1) Brahma, (2) Manu, (3) Ikṣvaku, (4) Nimi, (5) Janaka, (6) Udavasū, (7) Nandivardhana, (8) Suketu, (9) Devarata, (10) Brhadratha, (11) Mahavirya, (12) Sudhṛti, (13) Dhṛstaketu, (14) Haryasva, (15) Maru, (16) Pratipa, (17) Kṛtaratha, (18) Devamidha, (19) Visruta, (20) Mahadhṛti, (21) Kṛtirata, (22) Maharoma, (23) Svarnaroma, (24) Hrasvaroma, (25) Siradhvaja, (26) Kṛsadhvaja, (27) Dharmadhvaja, (28) Kṛtadhvaja, (29) Kesidhvaja, (30) Bhanuman, (31) Satadyumna, (32) Suci, (33) Sanadvaja, (34) Urjaketu, (35) Purujit, (36) Aristanemi, (37) Srutayu, (38) Suparsva, (39) Citraratha, (40) Ksemadhi, (41) Samaratha, (42) Satyaratha, (43) Upaguru, (44) Upagupta, (45) Vasvananta, (46) Yuyurvan, (47) Subhasana, (48) Sruta, (49) Jaya, (50) Vijaya, (51) Rta,

(52) Sunaka, (53) Vitahavya, (54) Dhrti, (55) Bahulasva, and (56) Krti. "All these kings of the dynasty of Mithila were completely in knowledge of their spiritual identity. Thus, by the grace of the supreme master of yoga, even though staying at home, they were liberated from the duality of material existence."

This passage of Srimad Bhagavatam does not mention the Grtsamada brahmana dynasty coming from Vitahavya, as described in the Mahabharata. Vitahavya is also addressed in the Srimad Bhagavatam as Saunaka Rsi.

The Karusa ksatriyas descended from Karusa, the son of Manu, and the Dharsta ksatriyas, who descended from Dhrsta, the brother of Karusa, attained the position of brahmanas. This is confirmed in the Srimad Bhagavatam (9.2.16-17) as follows:

*karusan manavad asan karusah ksatra-jatayah*

*dhrstad dharstam abhut ksatram brahma-bhuyam gatam ksitau*

"From Karusa, another son of Manu, came the Karusa dynasty, a family of ksatriyas. From the son of Manu named Dhrsta came a ksatriya caste called Dharsta, whose members achieved the position of brahmanas in this world." In his commentary on this verse, Sridhara Svami has written that the word brahma-bhuyam means "the position of brahmanas."

Devadatta was the tenth descendant from Narisyanta, the son of Manu. The son of the ksatriya Devadatta was Agnivesyayana, who became a maharsi-brahmana, thus inaugurating a dynasty of brahmanas. As stated in the Srimad Bhagavatam (9.2.19-22):

*citraseno narisyantad rksas tasya suto 'bhavat*

*tasya midhvams tatah purna indrasenas tu tat-sutah  
vitihotras tv indrasenat tasya satyasrava abhut  
urusravah sutas tasya devadattas tato 'bhavat  
tato 'gnivesyo bhagavan agnih svayam abhut sutah  
kanina iti vikhyato jatukarnyo mahan rsih  
tato brahma-kulam jatam agnivesyayanam nrpa*

(1) Narisyanta, (2) Citrasena, (3) Rksa, (4) Midhvan, (5) Purna, (6) Indrasena, (7) Vitihotra, (8) Satyasrava, (9) Urusrava, (10) Devadatta, and (11) Agnivesya. The fire-god Agni himself appeared as Agnivesya, the son of Devadatta. This son, who was a celebrated saint, was well known as Kanina and Jatukarnya. O King, from Agnivesya came a brahminical dynasty known as Agnivesyayana."

Jahnu Muni took birth as the son of Hotra of the Candra dynasty. His dynasty is listed in the Srimad Bhagavatam (9.15.1-4) as follows:

*ailasya corvasi-garbhat sad asann atmaja nrpa  
ayuh srutayuh satyayu rayo 'tha vijayo jayah  
srutayor vasuman putrah satyayos ca srutanjayah  
rayasya suta ekas ca jayasya tanayo 'mitah  
bhimas tu vijayasyatha kancano hotrakas tatah  
tasya jahnuh suto gangam gandusi-krtya yo 'pihat  
jahnos tu purus tasyatha balakas catmajo 'jakah*

*tatah kusah kusasyapi kusambus tanayo vasuh*

*kusanabhas ca catvaro gadhir asit kusambujah*

(1) Candra, (2) Budha, (3) Pururava, (4) Ayu, Srutayu, Satyayu, Raya, Vijaya and Jaya, (5) Vijaya's son Bhima, (6) Kancana, (7) Hotraka, (8) Jahnu, (9) Puru, (10) Balaka, (11) Ajaka, (12) Kusa, (13) Kusambu, or Kausika, and (14) Gadhi.

Ksatravrdha was the son of Ayuraja, of the Candra dynasty. The son of Ayuraja was Suhotra, whose son was Grtsamada. From Grtsamada came Sunaka, and from him came Saunaka, the great saint, the best of those conversant with the Rg Veda. This is stated in the Srimad Bhagavatam (9.17.3) as follows:

*kasyah kuso grtsamada iti grtsamadad abhut*

*sunakah saunako yasya bahvrca-pravaro munih*

"[Suhotra had three sons, named] Kasya, Kusa and Grtsamada. From Grtsamada came Sunaka, and from him came Saunaka, the great saint, the best of those conversant with the Rg Veda." In the dynasty of Puru, the youngest son of Maharaja Yayati of the Candra dynasty, Kanva Rsi was born. His son was named Medhatithi, from whom the Praskanna brahmana dynasty came. This is confirmed in the Srimad Bhagavatam (9.20.1-7) as follows:

*puror vamsam pravaksyami yatra jato 'si bharata*

*yatra rajarsayo vamsya brahma-vamsyas ca jajnire*

*janamejaya hy abhut puroh    pracinvams tat-sutas tatah  
pravira 'tha manusyur vai    tasmac carupado 'bhavat  
tasya sudyur abhut putras    tasmad bahugavas tatah  
samyatis tasyahamyati    raudrasvas tat-sutah smrtah  
rteyus tasya kakseyuh    sthandileyuh krteyukah  
jaleyuh sannateyus ca    dharma-satya-vrateyavah  
dasaite 'psarasah putra    vaneyus cavamah smrtah  
ghrtacyam indriyaniva    mukhyasya jagad-atmanah  
rteyo rantinavo 'bhut    trayas tasyatmaja nrpa  
sumatir dhruvo 'pratirathah    kanvo 'pratirathatmajah  
tasya medhatithis tasmad    praskannadya dvijatayah  
putro 'bhut sumate rebhir    dusmantis tat-suto matah*

"O Maharaja Pariksit, descendant of Maharaja Bharata, I shall now describe the dynasty of Puru, in which you were born, in which many saintly kings appeared, and from which many dynasties of brahmanas began: (1) Puru, (2) Janamejaya, (3) Pracinvan, (4) Pravira, (5) Manusyu, (6) Carupada, (7) Sudyu, (8) Bahugava, (9) Samyati, (10) Ahamyati, (11) Raudrasva, (12) Rteyu, (13) Rantinava, (14) Apratiratha, (15) Kanva, (16) Medhatithi, and (17) Praskanna and other brahmanas. The son of Rantinava named Sumati had a son named Rebhi. Maharaja Dusmanta is well known as the son of Rebhi."

Maharaja Bharata, the son of Dusmanta, had no descendants, therefore the Maruts gave Bharadvaja to Bharata as his adopted son. Bharadvaja was born as the fallen son of Brhaspati in the womb of Mamata, the wife

of Utathya. Thereafter, as the adopted son of Bharata, Bharadvaja became known as Vitanva. The son of Bharadvaja was Manyu, whose sons were Brhatksatra, Jaya, Mahavirya, Nara, and Garga. The son of Nara was Sankrti, whose sons were Guru and Rantideva. The son of Garga was Sini, who had a son named Gargya. Here is another example of a ksatriya giving birth to brahmanas.

This is described in the Srimad Bhagavatam (9.21.19-21, 30, 31, 33) as follows:

*gargac chinis tato gargyah ksatrad brahma hy avartata  
duritaksayo mahaviryat tasya trayyarunih kavih  
puskararunir ity atra ye brahmana-gatim gatah  
brhatksatrasya putro 'bhud dhasti yad-dhastinapuram  
ajamidho dvimidhas ca purumidhas ca hastinah  
ajamidhasya vamsyah syuh priyamedhadayo dvijah  
nalinyam ajamidhasya nilah santis tu tat-sutah  
santeh susantis tat-putrah purujo 'rkas tato 'bhavat  
bharmyasvas tanayas tasya pancasan mudgaladayah  
mudgalad brahma-nirvrttam gotram maudgalya-samjnitam*

"From Garga came a son named Sini, and his son was Gargya. Although Gargya was a ksatriya, there came from him a generation of brahmanas. From Mahavirya came a son named Duritaksaya, whose sons were Trayyaruni, Kavi and Puskararuni. Although these sons of Duritaksaya took birth in a dynasty of ksatriyas, they too attained the position of

brahmanas. Brhatksatra had a son named Hasti, who established the city of Hastinapura

[now New Delhi]. From King Hasti came three sons, named Ajamidha, Dvimidha and Purumidha. The descendants of Ajamidha, headed by Priyamedha, all achieved the position of brahmanas.

"Ajamidha had a son named Nila by his wife known as Nalini, and the son of Nila was Santi. The son of Santi was Susanti, the son of Susanti was Puruja, and the son of Puruja was Arka. From Arka came Bharmyasva, and from Bharmyasva came five sons, headed by Mudgala. From Mudgala came a dynasty of brahmanas known as Maudgalya."

Maharaja Nabhi, the son of Priyavrata, had a son named Rsabha. Rsabhadeva begot one hundred sons in the womb of His wife, who was given to Him by the King of heaven, Indra. Bharata and his next nine younger brothers became the kings of the nine varsas. Nine sons headed by Kavi and Havi, known as the Nava-yogendras, became Vaisnavas. The other eighty-one sons became brahmanas.

This is confirmed in the Srimad Bhagavatam (5.4.13) as follows:

*yaviyamsa ekasitir jayanteyah pitur adesa-kara maha-salina*

*maha-srotriya yajna-silah karma-visuddha brahmana babhuvuh.*

"In addition to these nineteen sons mentioned above, there were eighty-one younger ones, all born of Rsabhadeva and Jayanti. According to the order of their father, they became well cultured, well behaved, very pure in their activities and expert in Vedic knowledge and the performance of Vedic rituals. Thus they all became perfectly qualified brahmanas."

It is explained in the Hari-vamsa (Hari-vamsa-parva 11.9):

*nabhagadista-putrau dvau vaisyau brahmanatam gatau.*

"Nabhaga and the son of Dista, although vaisyas, both became brahmanas." According to their individual natures, among the sons of Grtsamada there were brahmanas headed by Saunaka as well as ksatriyas, vaisyas, and sudras. This is stated in the following words from the Hari-vamsa (Hari-vamsa-parva 29.7-8):

*putro grtsamadasyapi sunako yasya saunakah*

*brahmanah ksatriyas caiva vaisyah sudras tathaiva ca*

In his commentary on this verse, Nilakantha says: grtsamada-santatau sunakadayo brahmana anye ksatriyadayas ca sudrantah putra jatah- "Among the offspring of Grtsamada, some, headed by Sunaka, were brahmanas, some were ksatriyas, some were vaisyas, and some were sudras."

Apart from his five ksatriya sons, Bali Maharaja also had sons who founded brahmana dynasties. This is explained in the Hari-vamsa (Hari-vamsa-parva 31.33-35) as follows:

*maha-yogi sa tu balir abhuta nrpatih pura*

*putran utpadayam asa panca vamsa-karan bhuvi*

*angah prathamato jajne vangah suhmas tathaiva ca*

*pundrah kalingas ca tatha baleyam ksatram ucyate*

*baleya brahmanas caiva tasya vamsa-kara bhuvi*



"Bali Maharaja was a great yogi who became a king long ago. He begot five sons in order to increase the population of the earth.

"The first of his five sons was named Anga, the second was Vanga, the third Suhma, the fourth Pundra, and the fifth was Kalinga. These sons were known as Baleya ksatriyas.

"In the dynasty of Bali there were also Baleya brahmanas, who increased their descendants on the earth."

The sons of the great sage Kasyapa were divided into various varnas according to their nature. One can find ample evidence of this in the historical scriptures. It is not a fact that only one born in the family of a brahmana is a brahmana and those qualified as brahmanas by initiation and behavior are not brahmanas. This has been adequately confirmed by the above-quoted evidence. Even if the truth remains covered due to insufficient study of the sastras and intense selfishness, it will certainly become apparent in due course of time.

In this age of Kali there is often no respect for the truth among persons who are blinded by selfishness. Rather, disqualified persons are rewarded. Anyway, if after seeing all this evidence someone's selfishness is even slightly reduced, it will yield some kind of auspicious result in the world. By its own concocted arguments, an unqualified community can never put real obstacles on the path of qualified brahmanas.

The Brahma-sutra's (1.3.28) statement: *ata eva ca nityatvam*-"Therefore it is also eternal," has been explained as proving that the statements of the Vedas are eternal and the disciplic succession of brahmanas, who represent the demigods, is also eternal. Although brahmanas are "visible demigods," they are nevertheless eternal servants of Lord Visnu. The brahmanas' eternal source of knowledge is the Vedas. By studying the Vedas, they realize that they are eternal and become situated in the eternal devotional service of the Lord. Many persons become brahmana

even though they were not born in families of brahmanas engaged in studying the Vedas. In order to confirm this statement, Srila Jayatirthapada, in the sixth generation from Srimad Anandatirtha Madhvacarya, has cited vrschika-tanduli-nyaya, the logic of "the scorpion and the rice," in his Sruta-prakasika commentary as follows:

*brahmanad eva brahmana iti niyamasya kvacid anyathatvopapatte vrschika-tanduliyakadi-vad iti.*

When the seed of one scorpion is placed in the womb of another scorpion, a scorpion is born-this is the general law of nature. Yet sometimes it is seen that scorpions or other insects are born from rice. Although in this case the placement of seed is not seen, the inconceivable potency of the Absolute Truth, which makes the impossible possible, brings about the scorpions' appearance. Great sages like Vasistha, Agastya, Rsyasrnga, and Vyasadeva were not brahmanas by ordinary standards. Later, however, their descendants, being fully conversant with transcendental knowledge, became Recognized as self-realized brahmana Vaisnavas.

The various scriptural references describing the qualifications of brahmanas and showing respect for brahmanas refer to both seminal brahmanas and those who have become brahmanas by initiation. These references from scriptures on karma, jnana, and bhakti do not refer only to seminal brahmanas. In no case are brahmanas by initiation disregarded.

Although in the opinion of some scriptures there is no possibility of becoming an initiated brahmana unless one is a seminal brahmana, this restriction was imposed only because of narrow-minded social traditions. When this narrow-mindedness is given up by deep research and higher education, then the entire world will be illuminated by the glories of the

eternal Aryan culture. Then we will understand how futile is the attempt of frogs to fill the universe with the sound of their croaking.

## **Hari-jana-kanda**

## Section Concerning the Devotees of Hari

We have already discussed the conceptions of worldly people in the previous chapter. In this present chapter we will discuss the devotees of Lord Hari. In ancient times the Hari-janas and the Prakrti-janas had a debate over Ajamila. Due to their nature, Prakrti-janas tend to consider the Hari-janas to be similar to themselves. In this incident, the Prakrti-janas finally understood from their master that the Hari-janas are not subjected to the fruits of karma. We are herein quoting some essential points from this narration of Srimad Bhagavatam (6.3.25-28) by which we can realize the difference between the Prakrti-janas and Hari-janas.

*prayena veda tad idam na mahajano 'yam*

*devya vimohita-matir bata mayayalam*

*trayyam jadi-kṛta-matir madhu-puspitayam*

*vaitanike mahati karmani yuyjamaanah*

"Because they are bewildered by the illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Yajnavalkya and Jaimini and other compilers of the religious scriptures cannot know the secret, confidential religious system of the twelve mahajanas [or Hari-janas]. They cannot understand the transcendental value of performing devotional service or chanting the Hare

Kṛṣṇa mantra. Because their minds are attracted to the ritualistic ceremonies mentioned in the Vedas-especially the Yajur Veda, Sama Veda and Rg Veda-their intelligence has become dull. Thus they are busy collecting the ingredients for ritualistic ceremonies that yield only

temporary benefits, such as elevation to Svargaloka for material happiness. They are not attracted to the sankirtana movement; instead, they are interested in dharma, artha, kama and moksa.

*evam vimrsya sudhiyo bhagavaty anante*

*sarvatmana vidadhate khalu bhava-yogam*

*te me na dandam arhanty atha yady amisam*

*syat patakam tad api hanty urugaya-vadah*

"Considering all these points, therefore, intelligent men decide to solve all problems by adopting the devotional service of chanting the holy name of the Lord, who is situated in everyone's heart and who is a mine of all auspicious qualities. Such persons are not within my jurisdiction for punishment. Generally they never commit sinful activities, but even if by mistake or because of bewilderment or illusion they sometimes commit sinful acts, they are protected from sinful reactions because they always chant the Hare Krsna mantra.

*te deva-siddha-parigita-pavitra-gatha*

*ye sadhavah samadrso bhagavat-prapannah*

*tan nopasidata harer gadayabhiguptan*

*naisam vayam na ca vayah prabhavama dande*

"My dear servants, please do not approach such devotees, for they have fully surrendered to the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of

Godhead. They are equal to everyone, and their narrations are sung by the demigods and the inhabitants of Siddhaloka. Please do not even go near them. They are always protected by the club of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore Lord Brahma and I and even the time factor are not competent to chastise them.

*tan anayadhvam asato vimukhan mukunda-*

*padaravinda-makaranda-rasad ajasram*

*niskincanaih paramahamsa-kulair asangair*

*justad grhe niraya-vartmani baddha-trsnan*

"Paramahamsas are exalted persons who have no taste for material enjoyment and who drink the honey of the Lord's lotus feet. My dear servants, bring to me for punishment only persons who are averse to the taste of that honey, who do not associate with paramahamsas and who are attached to family life and worldly enjoyment, which form the path to hell."

In Sri Nrsimha Purana it is stated:

*aham amara-ganarcitena dhatra*

*yama iti loka-hitahite niyuktah*

*hari-guru-vimukhan prasasmi martyan*

*hari-carana-pranatan namas karomi*

"Yamaraja said: `I have been appointed by Lord Brahma, who is

worshiped by the demigods, to judge people's pious and impious activities. I severely punish the worldly fruitive actors who are averse to the spiritual master and Lord Hari, and I offer my obeisances to the Vaisnavas who have surrendered themselves at the lotus feet of Lord Hari."

Srimad Prabhu Jiva Gosvami has quoted the following verse from the Skanda Purana, as found in the Amrta-sara:

*na brahma na sivagnindra    naham nanye divaukasah*  
*saktas tu nigraham kartum    vaisnavanam mahatmanam*

"Lord Brahma, Lord Siva, Agni, Indra, myself (Yamaraja), and other demigods are unable to chastise the broad-minded Vaisnavas."

Needless to say, every created living being is subjected to the punishment of the demigods and Yamaraja; only the Vaisnavas are exceptions. (A Vaisnava is respected by he who judges pious and impious actions.)

The Padma Purana has stated:

*na karma-bandhanam janma    vaisnavanam ca vidyate*  
*visnur anucaratvam hi    moksam ahur manisinah*

"Vaisnavas are not bound by fruitive activities or forced to take birth, because learned persons have firmly declared that service to Lord Visnu is itself liberation."

It is stated in the Brahma-vaivarta Purana, Krsna-janma-khanda, Chapter 59 as follows:

*vahni-surya-brahmanebhyas    tejiyan vaisnava sada*  
*na vicaro na bhogas ca    vaisnavanam sva-karmanam*  
*likhitam samni kauthumyam    kuru prasnam brhaspatim*

"The Vaisnavas are always more powerful than Agni, Surya, and the brahmanas. Vaisnavas do not have to suffer the reactions of fruitive activities or concern themselves with analyzing these activities. This is stated in the Kauthumi branch of the Sama Veda. You may ask Brhaspati for confirmation of this."

The Vaisnava devotees of the Supreme Lord are not like ordinary human beings, who are forced to enjoy the results of their karma-this fact is stated in many places in the scriptures. The Vaisnavas are a particular type of incarnation of the Supreme Lord, and therefore they are not enjoyers of the fruits of karma. By the will of the Lord, they appear for the benefit of the people of the world just like an incarnation of the Supreme Lord.

It is stated in the Adi Purana as follows:

*aham eva dvija-srestha    nityam pracchanna-vigraha*  
*bhagavad-bhakta-rupena    lokan raksami sarvada*

"O best of the brahmanas, in My disguised form as a devotee, I always protect the people of this world."



*jagatam guravo bhakta bhaktanam guravo vayam*

*sarvatra guravo bhakta vayam ca guravo yatha*

"Sri Krsna said to Arjuna: The Vaisnavas are the spiritual masters of the entire world, and I am the spiritual master of the Vaisnavas. As I am the spiritual master of everyone, the devotees are also the spiritual masters of everyone."

In the entire world there is no object as worshipable as the Vaisnavas. The ultimate conclusion of the scriptures is that the Vaisnavas are better than the best, or the topmost ideals in the world.

The Skanda Purana, Utkala-khanda, says:

*maha-prasade govinde nama-brahmani vaisnave*

*svalpa-punyavatam rajan visvaso naiva jayate*

"Persons who are not very highly elevated in pious activities cannot believe in the remnants of food (prasada) of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, nor in Govinda, the holy name of the Lord, nor in the Vaisnavas." By the strength of their atheistic temperament, such persons are unable to properly see the Vaisnavas.

Unless they are fortunate, the karmis, jnanis, and gross materialists are naturally cheated from achieving the fruit, even when they do see such objects. They are so burdened with their respective rules and regulations that they are unable to lift their heads to look at these four transcendental objects. Being bound by their own narrow-mindedness, such pitiable souls cannot make any progress on the path of devotional service.

Although they know that devotees and devotional service are most rare in this world, they make no endeavor to attain them; rather they glorify their own fallen condition, commit offences at the feet of the devotees, and ultimately clear their path for further degradation.

In the Padma Purana it is stated:

*arcye visnau sila-dhir gurusu nara-matir vaisnave jati-buddhir*

*visnor va vaisnavanam kali-mala-mathane pada-tirtha 'mbu-buddhih*

*sri-visnor namni mantre sakala-kalusa-he sabda-samanya-buddhir*

*visnau sarvesvarese tad-itara-sama-dhir yasya va naraki sah*

"One who thinks the Deity in the temple to be made of wood or stone, who thinks of the spiritual master in the disciplic succession as an ordinary man, who thinks the Vaisnava in the Acyuta-gotra to belong to a certain caste or creed, who thinks of caranamrta or Ganges water as ordinary water, or who considers the Hare Krsna maha-mantra to be a material vibration is taken to be a resident of hell." The difference between devotees and nondevotees is scientifically and philosophically exhibited in these six considerations. The nondevotees like karmis, jnanis, and whimsical persons think of themselves as dutiful followers of the smrti-sastras, yet they cannot concur with the transcendental devotees. The practioners of devotional service purify their intelligence, attain the position of Vaisnavas, and give up the desire for and absorption in material enjoyment on the strength of worshiping the transcendental Lord. Controlled by pride and desiring to go to hell, the materialistic non-Vaisnava householders do go to hell because they have the nature of nondevotees, who are punishable by Yamaraja. Therefore there are always differences between the devotees and nondevotees.

The unfortunate hellish people, bewildered by the material modes, forget their spiritual identity and their spiritual duties. Material greed captures

them and sets them on the platform of mundane reputation, and they then claim that there is no devotion for Hari in this world, there are no devotees in the world, there have been only twelve devotees of Hari in the four yugas, and other similarly useless statements that dominate the thoughts of such people. Thus the material kingdom becomes their own asset and course of wanderings. When the ascetics and materialists, following in the footsteps of Hiranyakasipu, who is attached to women, gold, and household, proceed to cheat the world by exhibiting their pride while relishing hog stool-like fame, then such materialism will certainly be vanquished by reciting the statements of Prahlada Maharaja. For the benefit of the materialists we herein quote the easy path exhibited and glorified by Prahlada Maharaja. By this path the Prakṛti-janas qualify themselves to become Hari-janas. In the Srimad Bhagavatam (7.5.30-32) it is stated:

*matir na kṛsne parataḥ svato va*

*mitho 'bhipadyeta grha-vratanam*

*adanta-gobhir visatam tamisram*

*punah punas carvita-carvananam*

"Because of their uncontrolled senses, persons too addicted to materialistic life make progress toward hellish conditions and repeatedly chew that which has already been chewed. Their inclinations toward Kṛṣṇa are never aroused, either by the instructions of others, by their own efforts, or by a combination of both.

*na te viduḥ svartha-gatim hi viṣnum*

*durasaya ye bahir-artha-manināḥ*

*andha yathandhair upaniyamanas*

*te 'pisa-tantryam uru-damni baddhah*

"Persons who are strongly entrapped by the consciousness of enjoying material life, and who have therefore accepted as their leader or guru a similar blind man attached to external sense objects, cannot understand that the goal of life is to return home, back to Godhead, and engage in the service of Lord Visnu. As blind men guided by another blind man miss the right path and fall into a ditch, materially attached men led by another materially attached man are bound by the ropes of fruitive labor, which are made of very strong cords, and they continue again and again in materialistic life, suffering the threefold miseries.

*naisam matis tavad urukramanghrim*

*sprsaty anarthapagamo yad-arthah*

*mahiyasam pada-rajo-'bhisekam*

*niskincananam na vrnita yavat*

"Unless they smear upon their bodies the dust of the lotus feet of a Vaisnava completely freed from material contamination, persons very much inclined toward materialistic life cannot be attached to the lotus feet of the Lord, who is glorified for His uncommon activities. Only by becoming Krsna conscious and taking shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord in this way can one be freed from material contamination."

The subtle realization of the Vaisnavas is that worldly brahmanas who call themselves gurus and engage in fruitive activities and sense enjoyment advertise nondevotional activities as spiritual in such a way that they will never attain freedom from the material world either by

becoming disciples or gurus, by maintaining smarta, or ritualistic, mentality, or by the help of their smarta friends. If, however, they accept the dust from the lotus feet of an advanced paramahansa Vaisnava as the supreme goal, then they become freed from the ropes of karma, in the form of worldly brahmanism, and they then take shelter of devotional service to Lord Visnu by giving up advancement in the materialistic way of life, which is the path to hell. Such unalloyed Vaisnavas achieve the transcendental lotus feet of Lord Hari.

The Srimad Bhagavatam (5.12.12) says:

*rahuganaitat tapasa na yati*

*na cejyaya nirvapanad grhad va*

*na cchandasa naiva jalagni-suryair*

*vina mahat-pada-rajo-'bhisekam*

When King Rahugana was going to visit Kapila Muni in search of the truth and the great soul Bharata was carrying his palenquin, the king submitted to the great devotee Bharata, who then explained how the living entity could attain the highest benefit in the following words:

"My dear King Rahugana, unless one has the opportunity to smear his entire body with the dust of the lotus feet of great devotees, one cannot realize the Absolute Truth. One cannot realize the Absolute Truth simply by observing celibacy [brahmacarya], strictly following the rules and regulations of householder life, leaving home as a vanaprastha, accepting sannyasa, or undergoing severe penances in winter by keeping oneself submerged in water or surrounding oneself in summer by fire and the scorching heat of the sun. There are many other processes to understand the Absolute Truth, but the Absolute Truth is only revealed to one who has attained the mercy of a great devotee."

This instruction expresses the same message as the instructions of Prahlada Maharaja to Hiranyakasipu. The instructions that smarta gurus give to the attached householders, those who desire material advancement, the less-intelligent, the followers of the smrtis, those who meditate on Kali with closed eyes, the students, wrestlers, market salesmen, and sense gratifiers, who are all qualified for such instructions, are not at all pleasing to the transcendental, liberated, advanced Vaisnavas. Those who have already attained the highest goal of the smarta regulations in their previous life take birth as Vaisnavas in the homes of Hari-janas. To broadcast the glories of mundane ritualists before such persons is simply a matter of arrogance.

In this material creation there are two types of living entities—one is conditioned by the three modes of material nature and the other is transcendental. The conditioned souls who are averse to Lord Hari consider themselves weak, imperfect, controlled by their enemies lust, greed and so on, forced to accept the results of pious and impious activities, prone to be influenced by the three modes of material nature, eligible for becoming ghosts, materially designated, situated in Devi-dhama, proud of being materialistic, servants of the demigods, conditioned by matter, and unqualified for serving Lord Hari. They thus praise the nondevotees' philosophy based on the smrtis, which is suitable for fools. The transcendental Hari-janas, however, realize that their Lord is most merciful, omnipotent, and most affectionate to His devotees. Although they consider themselves materialists, they actually realize themselves as eternal servants of Hari, beyond the fruits of karma, beyond the three modes of material nature, eligible for attaining Goloka, devoid of material designations, beyond Devi-dhama, not of this world, eternal, beyond the control of the demigods, liberated, beyond material prestige such as received by brahmanas, endowed with pure brahminical qualities, appreciative of the fact that mundane honor is less valuable than straw, free from false pride, completely tolerant, and ready to offer respects even to insignificant persons. In this way they obtain ecstasy while chanting the names of Krsna.

Lord Visnu and the Vaisnavas are beyond the material creation. For them, the illusory identification as brahmanas of this world is secondary

and irrelevant. When a living entity identifies himself as Krsna's servant, maya cannot act him. The Lord Himself says in Bhagavad-gita (7.14):

*daivi hy esa guna-mayi mama maya duratyaya*

*mam eva ye prapadyante mayam etam taranti te*

"This divine energy of Mine, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is difficult to overcome. But those who have surrendered unto Me can easily cross beyond it."

The servants of the rules and regulations may themselves attain high qualifications, yet they cannot cross beyond maya by their own strength. Only the Vaisnavas on the strength of their devotional service are able to serve the Lord, who is beyond maya. As stated in the Srimad Bhagavatam (2.7.42):

*yesam sa esa bhagavan dayayed anantah*

*sarvatmanasrita-pado yadi nirvyalikam*

*te dustaram atitaranti ca deva-mayam*

*naisam mamaham iti dhih sva-srgala-bhaksye*

"But anyone who is specifically favored by the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, due to unalloyed surrender unto the service of the Lord, can overcome the insurmountable ocean of illusion and can understand the Lord. But those who are attached to this body, which is meant to be eaten at the end by dogs and jackals, cannot do so." Those duplicitous persons who consider "I" and "mine" in relationship with the

material body, which is ultimately eaten by dogs and jackals, become Vaisnavas out of fashion while internally maintaining a desire for material happiness. Such persons cannot attain the good fortune of devotional service to the Lord, because they have a fruitive mentality and are still under the influence of maya.

The pleasure-seeking worldly smartas are generally unable to understand the exalted position of a self-satisfied Vaisnava.

Srimad Bhagavatam (1.7.10) states:

*atmaramas ca munayo nirgrantha apy urukrame*

*kurvanty ahaitukim bhaktim ittham-bhuta-guno harih*

"All different varieties of atmaramas [those who take pleasure in atma, or spirit self], especially those established on the path of self-realization, though freed from all kinds of material bondage, desire to render unalloyed devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead. This means that the Lord possesses transcendental qualities and therefore can attract everyone, including liberated souls." Therefore devotional service alone is the wealth of the liberated souls.

The Srimad Bhagavatam (4.24.29) also says:

*sva-dharma-nisthah sata-janmabhih puman*

*virincatam eti tatah param hi mam*

*avyakrtam bhagavato 'tha vaisnavam*

*padam yathaham vibudhah kalatyaye*



"[Lord Siva said:] A person who executes his occupational duty properly for one hundred births becomes qualified to occupy the post of Brahma, and if he becomes more qualified, he can approach Lord Siva. A person who is directly surrendered to Lord Krsna, or Visnu, in unalloyed devotional service is immediately promoted to the spiritual planets. Lord Siva and other demigods attain these planets after the destruction of this material world."

The Srimad Bhagavatam (3.28.44) states:

*tasmad imam svam prakrtim daivim sad-asad-atmikam*

*durvibhavyam parabhavya svarupenavatisthate*

"Thus the yogi [or Hari-jana] can be in the self-realized position after conquering the insurmountable spell of maya, who presents herself as both the cause and effect of this material manifestation and is therefore very difficult to understand."

Materialistic persons who are proud of their varna and who are puppets in the hands of maya try to act independently while glorifying the wheel of karma, but the devotees know that attempts to become the master of maya are in reality service to maya, which is the cause of bondage, so they give up hellish fruitive mentality and understand the eternal service of the Supreme Lord as their constitutional duty.

By following the principles of varnasrama, one accumulates pious activities in material life. And by engaging in activities outside of the varnasrama system in this world one amasses sins. Sinful and pious activities are inevitable for those who proudly consider themselves Prakrti-janas in this kingdom of desire. This is not the case with the Hari-janas.

In the Mundaka Upanisad (3.3) it is stated:

*yada pasyah pasyate rukma-varnam*

*kartaram isam purusam brahma-yonim*

*tada vidvan punya-pape vidhuya*

*niranjanah paramam samyam upaiti*

"When a person with transcendental vision, that is, a devotee of the Supreme Lord who has the eyes of devotion, is able to see the Supreme Person-His creator and master, the Lord of the brahmanas whose bodily complexion is golden-then that person is endowed with transcendental knowledge and liberation, uplifted from the material ego. He gives up piety and sin, becoming completely pure and equipoised."

If one follows a few of the sentiments of Acarya Srila Prabodhananda Sarasvati, the king of tridandis following in the footsteps of Sri Mahaprabhu, then he can realize who is a Hari-jana and who is a non-Vaisnava engaged in devotional service mixed with karma.

*kaivalyam narakayate tridasa-pur akasa-puspayate*

*durdantendriya-kala-sarpa-patali protkhata-damstrayate*

*visvam purna-sukhayate vidhi-mahendradis ca kitayate*

*yat karunya-kataksa-vaibhavavatam tam gauram eva stumah*

"For a devotee who has received Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's merciful glance, kaivalya, merging into the existence of Brahman, appears hellish,

the heavenly planets appear like phantasmagoria, the senses appear like serpents with broken teeth, the entire world becomes a replica of Vaikuntha, and the position of demigods like Lord Brahma and Lord Indra is considered equal to that of tiny insects. We pray to that Lord, Sri Gaurasundara."

*upasatam va guru-varya-kotir*

*adhiyatam va sruti-sastra-kotih*

*caitanya-karunya-kataksa-bhajam*

*bhavet param sadya rahasya-labhah*

"Whatever result one achieves by worshiping millions of the best of the wayward karmi and jnani spiritual masters or by studying millions of Vedic literatures, we don't care. But by associating with devotees who have received the merciful sidelong glance of Sri Caitanyadeva one can immediately understand the great secret of pure love for Lord Krsna. It is useless for those who are attached to the principles of varnasrama to accept millions of gurus or study millions of Vedic literatures unless they become unalloyed devotees."

*kriyasaktan dhig dhig vikata-tapaso dhik ca yaminah*

*dhig astu brahmaham vadana-pariphullan jada-matin*

*kim etan socamo visaya-rasa-mattan nara-pasun*

*na kesancil-leso 'py ahaha milito gaura-madhunah*

"Condemned are those who are fond of the Vedic fruitive rituals!  
Condemned are those self-controlled persons who are fond of severe  
austerities! Condemned are those persons with material conceptions who  
nevertheless take pleasure in declaring 'I am Brahman!' How much more  
shall I lament for these karmis, jnanis, and tapasvis, who are absorbed in  
sense gratification and are just like two-legged animals. Alas! They were  
not fortunate enough to have tasted even a drop of the nectar of Lord  
Gaura's kirtana."

*kalah kalir balina indriya-vairi-vargah*

*sri-bhakti-marga iha kantaka-koti-ruddhah*

*ha ha kva yami vikalah kim aham karomi*

*caitanya-candra yadi nadya krpam karosi*

"Now it is the age of Kali. My enemies headed by the senses are very  
strong. The beautiful path of bhakti to the Supreme Lord is spiked with  
countless thorns like karma, jnana, and unregulated sense enjoyment. O  
Lord Caitanyacandra, if You do not bestow Your mercy on me today,  
then, being confused, where will I go and what will I do?"

*duskarma-koti-niratasya duranta-ghora-*

*durvasana-nigada-srnkhalitasya gadham*

*klisyan-mateh kumati-koti-kadarthitasya*

*gauram vinadya mama ko bhaviteha bandhuh*

"I have committed millions of sinful activities while wandering the path of karma. I am tightly bound by the shackles of uncontrollable material desires. My intelligence is afflicted by the misguidance of the karmis, jnanis, and unregulated sense enjoyers. Other than Lord Gaura, who will be my friend in this world?"

*ha hanta hanta paramosara-citta-bhumau*  
*vyartha-bhavanti mama sadhana-kotayo 'pi*  
*sarvatmana tad aham adbhuta-bhakti-bijam*  
*sri-gauracandra-caranam saranam karomi*

"Alas! The seeds of millions of karma and jnana rituals have failed to fructify in the barren field of my heart. Therefore I will now take full shelter of the lotus feet of Lord Gauracandra, who is the seed of wonderful devotional service."

*mrgyapi sa siva-sukoddhava-naradadyair*  
*ascarya-bhakti-padavi na daviyasi nah*  
*durbodha-vaibhava-pate mayi pamare 'pi*  
*caitanya-candra yadi te karuna-kataksah*

"O Lord Caitanyacandra, O You who enlightens the ignorant, if You grace me with Your merciful glance, then even though I am a wretch I will not be far away from the wonderful path of pure devotion, which is rarely attained by Siva, Sukadeva, Uddhava, Narada, and other great souls.

Due to their poor fund of knowledge, the karmis understand their inability and become averse to devotional service, but this is not the case with the devotees. Serving Krsna is nothing like fruitive work."

*nistham prapta vyavahrti-tati-laukiki vaidiki ya  
ya va lajja prahasana-samudgana-natyotsavesu  
ye vabhuvann ahaha sahaja-prana-dehartha-dharma  
gauras caurah sakalam aharat ko 'pi me tivra-viryah*

"My faith in Vedic and ordinary duties, my embarrassment to sing, dance, and laugh, and my natural tendency to be absorbed in material activities for the sustenance of my life air and body have all been forcibly stolen away by the golden-complexioned thief, Gaurahari. When one becomes a Vaisnava, all insignificant endeavors are automatically reduced."

*patanti yadi siddhayah kara-tale svayam durlabhah  
svayam ca yadi sevaki-bhavitum agatah syuh surah  
kim anyad idam eva va yadi catur-bhujam syad vapus  
tathapi mama no manak calati gaura-candran manah*

"What to speak if the rarely attained eight mystic perfections-anima and so on-fell into my hands without endeavor and the widely-served ideals of enjoyment, the demigods, willingly came to me as my order-carriers offering heavenly pleasures, even if I were awarded the four-armed form of Narayana in place of my present material body my mind would still not

move an inch from the service of Gaurahari, the Supreme Lord dressed as a devotee."

The glory and prominence of devotional service is not at all subordinate to karma, jnana, or uncontrolled sense gratification. The devotees firmly believe that they will never fall prey to insignificant greed. But those persons who, due to their duplicitous nature, do not understand the real characteristics of devotional service and who, due to their fruitive mentality, consider devotional service as another category of karma-kanda, quickly commit offenses at the feet of devotees and fall down into the kingdom of sin. As a result of their offenses, they are greatly disturbed by various impediments beginning with caste consciousness, such as considering themselves brahmanas, attachment to occupations like giving and receiving charity, and, ultimately, their own envious mentality. These fruitive workers, who are envious of the devotees, are swallowed by false ego in the form of considering Govardhana-sila, the life and soul of the paramahansas, as stone, considering Vaisnavas as belonging to a particular caste, and lack of faith in the water that has washed the feet of the Hari-janas. The devotees, however, are not greedy, foolish, or weak like them.

*dante nidhaya trnakam padayor-nipatya*

*krtva ca kaku-satam etad aham bravimi*

*he sadhavaḥ sakalam eva vihaya durad*

*gaurāṅga-candra-carane kurutaṇuragam*

"Taking a straw in my teeth I fall at your feet hundreds of times and humbly appeal to you, saying: O saintly persons! Please give up your path of advancement and its goal, forget about following the principles of varnasrama, disregard religiousity and irreligiousity, remain equal to pious and impious activities, and do not consider bondage or liberation.\

Simply cultivate attachment for the lotus feet of Sri Krsna Caitanya."

Unless one possesses unalloyed devotion, he cannot have the good fortune to receive initiation or teachings on devotional service from a spiritual master. If a person is careless, then after obtaining mantras and the process for worshiping the Lord through aural reception, they become the source of material attachment. Those who give up duplicity and properly hear the topics of Hari from a bona fide spiritual master and those whose ears are able to properly receive such topics, only they are able to repeat the same words. The very same mercy and teachings that Tridandi Prabhu Sri Prabodhananda received from Sriman Mahaprabhu were preserved by him in verses for the benefit of future devotees. Those who have a taste for the mood of Prabodhananda are worthy of being called Vaisnavas, otherwise one simply wanders about searching for insignificant eatables like banana stalks, dal balls, and drumsticks.

*stri-putradi-katham jahur vivasayinah sastra-pravadam budha*

*yogindra vijahur -marun-niyama-ja-klesam tapas tapasah*

*jnanabhyasa-vidhim jahus ca yatayas caitanya-candre param*

*aviskurvati bhakti-yoga-padavim naivanya asid rasah*

"Now that Lord Caitanyacandra has revealed the path of pure devotional service, the materialists have given up talking about their wives, children, and material affairs, the scholars have given up debating the scriptures, the yogis have given up the trouble to control their breath, the ascetics have given up their austerities, and the impersonalists have

given up studying Vedanta. Being attracted by the sweet beauty of devotional service to Krsna, all the shopkeepers have stopped selling their insignificant wares." Such is the uncommon influence of devotional service. Until one realizes the beauty of devotional service, he continues to traverse the path of karma, jnana, and sense gratification."



The poet Sarvajna says:

*tvad-bhaktah saritam patim culuka-vat khadyota-vat bhaskaram  
merum pasyati lostra-vat kim aparam bhumeh patim bhrtya-vat  
cintaratna-cayam sila-sakala-vat kalpa-drumam kastha-vat  
samsaram trna-rasi-vat kim aparam deham nijam bhara-vat*

"O my Lord, Your devotee considers the ocean as a palmful of water, the brilliant sun as a firefly, Mount Meru as a stone, a king as a servant, a touchstone as an ordinary stone, a desire tree as ordinary wood, the whole material world as straw, and, above all, his own body as a burden."

The foolish, materialistic karmis, who are attached to their bodies, consider, "I am this body, and this body is mine," and thus differentiate between their relatives and others. They see the wonder of material objects and hanker after them. Vaisnavas, however, do not have such low mentality. They are the best of all persons and therefore cannot be compared with selfish, greedy karmis.

The Vaisnava saint Sri Madhava Sarasvatipada has stated:

*mimamsa-rajasa malimasa-drsam tavan na dhira isvare  
garvodarka-kutarka-karkasa-dhiyam duro 'pi varta hareh  
jananto 'pi na janate sruti-sukham sri-rangi-sangad rte  
su-svadum parivesayanty api rasam gurvi na darvi sprset*

"Those followers of Jaimini, Gautama, and Kanada, whose eyes of knowledge have been contaminated by Purva-mimamsa and the related karma-kanda, who are proud of being materialistic, whose intelligence is crude, and who have no faith in the Supreme Lord always remain far separated from discussions on the topics of Lord Hari. Due to being bereft of association with the devotees of the Lord, who enjoys pastimes with the goddesses of fortune, such persons cannot relish the nectarean essence of the scriptures even though they understand the purport of the scriptures, just as a spoon is unable to relish the same palatable foodstuffs that it serves." Materialistic philosophers who carry the burden of sense enjoyment like asses are devoid of the service attitude towards Sri Purusottama and are thus unqualified for relishing the devotional service of Lord Hari. The karmis, jnanis, and unregulated sense enjoyers are unable to understand the glories of devotional service. The Vaisnavas, however, are not frustrated like the karmis.

A Vaisnava saint named Pandita Dhananjaya has stated:

*stavakas tava catur-mukhadayo*

*bhavaka hi bhagavan bhavadayah*

*sevakah sata-makhadayah sura*

*vasudeva yadi ke tada vayam*

"O Lord Vasudeva, since four-headed Brahma, other progenitors of the demigods, and other living entities pray to You, since great yogis like Mahadeva meditate on You, and since Indra, the king of heaven, and the other demigods are Your servants, then who are we? Does this mean that we have no qualification for devotional service?"

Along with this verse, another verse from the Srimad Bhagavatam comes to mind. The Srimad Bhagavatam (1.8.26) states:

*janmaisvarya-sruta-sribhir edhamana-madah puman*

*naivarhaty abhidhatum vai tvam akincana-gocaram*

"The glories of high birth as a brahmana or demigod, the glories of opulence equal to that of Kuvera, the glories of sages who strictly follow the Vedas, and the glories of beauty equal to that of Cupid simply increase the madness of materialists. Therefore, O Hari, You are the Lord of the poor, and as such materially prosperous persons have no taste, opportunity, or qualification for chanting Your holy names." Vaisnavism is the only wealth of the poor. False prestige and dominance, which are the assets of nondevotees, are not aspired for by Vaisnavas. The wealth of the Vaisnavas is Lord Hari. Being maddened with excessive material attachment and being either puffed-up from cheap brahminical prestige and learning or from the cheap wealth of the ksatriyas and vaisyas, people disrespect the swanlike Vaisnavas and as a result of sinful activities become nondevotees. Since the Hari-janas, who are poor, fallen, indifferent to material enjoyment, and dedicated to serving Lord Hari, do not desire to accumulate material assets, understanding that desires for high brahminical birth, opulence, knowledge of the Vedas, and beauty equal to Cupid are all useless, they therefore engage in chanting the glories of Lord Hari, free from the desires for engaging both in brahmanical ritualistic ceremonies and study of the Vedas, both of which aim at sense gratification. In brief, the prestige of brahmanas expert in Vedic study, the opulence of ksatriyas having vast wealth, followers, and kingdom, and the prosperity of the vaisyas' wealth and beauty obtained through farming and trade, are not qualifications for becoming a Vaisnava; they are simply means of bondage to material enjoyment, which is due to disinterest in devotional service and which increases one's godlessness. Because the Vaisnavas are not busy for such insignificant things, they are more humble than the straw, more tolerant than a tall tree, not interested in personal prestige, and always ready to respect others. In this way they

attain devotional service to Lord Hari. Moreover, after completing their term, the demigods, who are situated on the highest platform in the kingdom of fruitive activities, attain the position of Vaisnavas due to the influence of their devotion for the Lord. But their exalted position is glorified only for the benefit of the conditioned souls. When material qualifications are exhausted, then one's identification with pure Vaisnavism is awakened. If a powerful person is capable of killing innumerable living entities, yet instead of misusing his power he remains peaceful, that does not mean that he lacks power. Similarly, even though Lord Brahma and his descendants headed by the brahmanas may consider that becoming a Vaisnava is the highest goal of life, the position of a living entity who has actually acquired the taste for serving Krsna is even higher. Such persons are confidential associates of the Lord.

In the Caitanya-caritamṛta (Antya 4.66-68) Śrīman Mahāprabhu has instructed Śrī Sanātana as follows:

*nica-jati nahe kṛṣṇa-bhājanē ayogyā*

*sat-kula-vipra nahe bhājanera yogyā*

"A person born in a low family is not unfit for discharging devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, nor is one fit for devotional service simply because he is born in an aristocratic family of brahmanas.

*yēi bhājē sēi bada, abhaktā-hina, charā*

*kṛṣṇa-bhājanē nahi jati-kulādi-vicāra*

"Anyone who takes to devotional service is exalted, whereas a nondevotee is

always condemned and abominable. Therefore in the discharge of devotional service to the Lord, there is no consideration of the status of one's family.

*dinere adhika daya kare bhagavan*

*kulina, pandita, dhanira bada abhimana*

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna, is always favorable to the humble and meek, but aristocrats, learned scholars and the wealthy are always proud of their positions."

The prestige of high birth promotes material enjoyment. Persons of lower castes, however, are restricted in their ability to enjoy in various ways.

Though they are not eligible for material auspiciousness, they have every right and opportunity to attain eternal auspiciousness by serving the Supreme Lord. Even if one who is mad after material enjoyment attains the highest position and facility, it is all temporary and unfavorable for real auspiciousness.

One who serves the Absolute Truth is the best of all, and one who is uninterested in the service of the Absolute Truth simply wastes his time trying to become the master of all temporary activities. He is certainly distinct from and inferior to the real servant of the Absolute Truth. Worldly education, high birth, and prestige of high position cannot hinder

the genuine devotees of the Lord, especially those who accept only what is required rather than being maddened by the spirit of enjoying this world created by shadows. Such self-satisfied, humble devotees, who know the art of engaging everything in the service of the Lord, can actually attain the mercy of the Supreme Lord. And those who try to become more powerful by the help of various opulences like high position, high birth, and material

erudition thereby simply exhibit indifference towards receiving the mercy

of the Lord. Therefore there is no possibility of their achieving real auspiciousness. Sinful propensities, which increase unwanted nescience, are reflected in the hearts of people and stand in opposition to the service of the Lord, which is spiritually illuminating.

The great devotee Sri Madhavendra Puri says:

*sandhya-vandana bhadram astu bhavato bhoh snana tubhyam namo*

*bho devah pitaras ca tarpana-vidhau naham ksamah ksamyatam*

*yatra kvapi nisadya yadava-kulottamasya kamsa-dvisah*

*smaram smaram agham harami tad alam manye kim anyena me*

"O my prayers three times a day, all glory to you. O bathing, I offer my obeisances unto you. O demigods! O forefathers! Please excuse me for my inability to offer you my respects. Now wherever I sit, I can remember the great descendant of the Yadu dynasty [Krsna], the enemy of Kamsa, and thereby I can free myself from all sinful bondage. I think this is sufficient for me."

One devotee emotionally expressed himself to the Lord as follows:

*snanam mlanam abhut kriya na ca kriya sandhya ca vandhyabhavad*

*vedah khedam avapa sastra-patali samtitantah sphuta*

*dharmo marma-hato hy adharma-nicayah prayah ksayam praptavan*

*cittam cumbati yadavendra-caranambhoje mamahar-nisam*

"My daily bath has been contaminated, my activities have been ruined, my sandhya prayers have become fruitless like a barren wife, my study of the Vedas has been disturbed, my scriptures have been retired to a box, my religious principles have become afflicted, and my irreligiosity has been diminished, all because the bee of my heart is constantly kissing the lotus feet of Yadavendra, the king of the Yadu dynasty."

These sentiments of devotees who are free from material existence can never be understood by people who are sinful, low-class, and either regulated or unregulated followers of rituals. If a sinful, fallen living entity guided by the smrtis actually realizes these sentiments of the devotees, then no one can describe his good fortune. Many persons foolishly criticize the short-sighted or blind persons' right and necessity for wearing glasses without realizing the utility of the glasses; similarly the smartas consider the Vaisnavas ordinary living entities like themselves. Actually there is a gulf of difference between the smartas and the devotees. We have already quoted the statements of a few scriptures and the confidential mood of some devotees in this regard. The intelligent Prakrti-janas will realize the position and respectability of the Hari-janas from these statements.

It is stated in the Srimad Bhagavatam (11.2.51) as follows:

*na yasya janma-karmabhyam na varnasrama-jatibhih*

*sajjate 'sminn aham-bhavo dehe vai sa hareh priyah*

"If one does not become proud of one's material body made of skin and flesh in spite of taking an aristocratic birth, such as that of a brahmana, executing pious activities, like giving and accepting charity, and having a prestigious position within varnasrama society, then one is to be considered the dearmost servitor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

Although Vaisnavas may appear in a family of brahmanas, act as acaryas, and be respected by the entire world, they never become proud of their high social order as brahmanas, their high social position as sannyasis, or their seminal or initiated high caste. Only the smartas, who are attached to fruitive activities, develop strong aversion to Lord Hari due to their excessive attachment to material life. In order to understand the adverse mentality of materialistic karmis one should study the following verse of the Srimad Bhagavatam (10.84.13):

*yasyatma-buddhih kunape tri-dhatuke*

*sva-dhih kalatradisu bhauma ijya-dhih*

*yat-tirtha-buddhih salile na karhicij*

*janesv abhijnesu sa eva go-kharah*

"The Supreme Lord said: Anyone who, because of giving up the transcendental realization of a Vaisnava and developing excessive attachment to the material world, accepts this bodily bag of three elements [bile, mucus, and air] as his self, considers the by-products of the body to be his kinsmen, considers material objects as worshipable, considers ordinary bodies of waters as holy places of pilgrimage, and lacks proper understanding of Visnu and the Vaisnavas, is no better than an ass or a cow." The devotees of the Lord do not praise their intelligence.



One should attentively consider verse 38 from the Fifth Chapter of the Brahma-samhita, which says:

*premanjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena*

*santah sadaiva hrdayesu vilokayanti*

*yam syamasundaram acintya-guna-svarupam*

*govindam adi-purusam tam aham bhajami*

"I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who is Syamasundara, Krsna Himself with inconceivable innumerable attributes, [whom the materialistic sahajiyas-due to their fruitive mentality, enjoying spirit, and mundane imagination-think that they have seen, and] whom the pure devotees [Hari-janas] see in their heart of hearts with the eye of devotion tinged with the salve of love." The smartas and devotees have different methods

and objects of vision, which foolish ordinary people cannot understand.

According to the realization of Thakura Bilvamangala-deva, if such devotion awakens in one's heart, then the mood of a real Hari-jana will automatically manifest in that devotee's heart. As stated in the Krsna-karnamrta (107):

*bhaktis tvayi sthira-tara bhagavan yadi syad*

*daivena nah phalati divya-kisora-murtih*

*muktiḥ svayam mukulitanjali sevate 'sman*

*dharmartha-kama-gatayah samaya-pratiksah*

"O my Lord, if one engages in Your pure devotional service [free from karma, jnana, and sense gratification] with determination, You become visible in Your original transcendental youthful form as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As far as liberation is concerned, she stands before the devotee with folded hands waiting to render service. Religion, economic development and sense gratification [which are difficult to achieve for nondevotees with material desires] are all automatically attained without separate endeavor."

The smartas, or nondevotees who are simply attached to rules and regulations, are content with the fruits of the four aims of life-religion, economic development, sense gratification, and liberation. Yet these four principles naturally and submissively remain under the feet of the Hari-janas. The Hari-janas are liberated persons, so they have no enthusiasm for conditioned life.

When do the karmis give up their occupational duties and understand the glories of devotional service to the Lord? The Srimad Bhagavatam (11.14.14) gives the following illustration:

*na paramesthyam na mahendra-dhisnyam*

*na sarvabhaumam na rasadhipatyam*

*na yoga-siddhir apunar-bhavam va*

*mayy arpitatmecchati mad vinanyat*

"The Supreme Lord said: The devotee who has offered his soul to Me does not want anything if it is separate from Me-not the position of the supreme demigod of the universe, Brahma, nor that of Lord Indra, nor kingship over the entire earth or over the lower planetary systems, nor the mystic perfections of yoga, nor even freedom from the cycle of rebirth." These are constitutional symptoms of devotees.

Sri Hari is the only goal and objective of the Hari-janas. Others naturally become bewildered by the good birth and education of the brahmanas or by the wealth, opulences, and success in trade of the ksatriyas and vaisyas. The feelings and behavior of nondevotees are completely different to the feelings and behavior of devotees. The former are influenced by contamination and lamentation, whereas the later are full of ecstasy in

the service of Hari The saint Kulasekhara Alvar (a perfect devotee), who was the king of

Kerala, has stated:

*nastha dharme na vasu-nicaye naiva kamopabhoge*

*yad bhavyam tad bhavatu bhagavan purva-karmanurupam*

*etat prarthyam mama bahu matam janma-janmantare 'pi*

*tvat-padambhoruha-yuga-gata niscala bhaktir astu*

"My Lord, I have no attraction for performing religious rituals or holding

any earthly kingdom. I do not care for sense enjoyments; let them appear and disappear in accordance with my previous deeds. My only desire is to be fixed in devotional service to Your lotus feet, even though I may continue to take birth here life after life."

According to the nondevotees, the three aims of religion, economic development, and sense gratification are to be enjoyed and the fourth aim, liberation, is the ultimate goal of life, but the Vaisnava Kulasekhara Alavar thinks, "Let them come on their own accord," as he considers the eternality of devotional service in the following words:

*maj-janmanah phalam idam madhu-kaitabhare*

*mat-prarthaniya-mad-anugraha esa eva*

*tvad-bhrtya-bhrtya-paricaraka-bhrtya-bhrtya-*

*bhrtyasya bhrtya iti mam smara loka-natha*

"O enemy of Madhu and Kaitabha, O Lord of the universe, the perfection of my life and my heartfelt prayer is that You consider me the servant of the servant of the servant of the servant of the servant of Your servant."

In summary, we can say that Kulasekhara, the king of Kerala and ornament of the ksatriya dynasty, did not pray to become a brahmana. He was always eager to attain the eternally glorious position of a devotee of the Lord. This great personality was a spiritual master in the Sri Ramanuja-sampradaya and an incarnation of a devotee.

Mahatma Yamuna Muni [Yamunacarya] has written:

*na dharma-nistho 'smi na catma-vedi*

*na bhaktimams tvac-caranaravinde*

*akincano 'nanya-gatih saranya*

*tvat-pada-mulam saranam prapadye*

*tava dasya-sukhaika-sanginam*

*bhavanesv astv api kita-janma me*

*itaravasathesu ma sma bhud*

*api me janma catur-mukhatmana*

"O Hari, You are the object of my surrender. I have no faith in varnasrama-dharma, and I have no knowledge of the soul. Furthermore, I have no devotion to Your lotus feet. I am utterly destitute, a rogue with no idea of the goal of life. Therefore I take shelter of Your lotus feet. O my Lord, I think it is better to be born as an insect in the house of a Vaisnava, than to be born as Lord Brahma in the house of a nondevotee."

Although this mahatma was recognised as a seminal brahmana, the extent to which he accepted subordination to his spiritual master, Bakulabharana Sathakopa, who was considered a seminal sudra, incarnation of devotee, and perfect Vaisnava associate of the Lord, is understood from Stotra-ratna (7), wherein he declares:

*mata pita yuvatayas tanaya vibhutih*

*sarvam yad eva niyamena mad-anvayanam*

*adyasya nah kula-pater bakulabhiramam*

*srimat-tad-anghri-yugalam pranamami murdhna*

"I reverently bow my head to the blessed feet, attractive as bakula flowers, of Satakopa, the first acarya of our devotional family. For our disciplic succession His lotus feet are everything-our father, mother, son, wife, and wealth."

Even after discussing the devotion that was shown to Sathakopa by the sage Sri Alabandaru, who was born in a very prestigious brahmana family, persons with insignificant smarta conceptions nevertheless claim to be Vaisnavas in order to fill their bellies while avoiding Vaisnava association and arrogantly disrespecting Sri Sri Visnupada Raghunatha dasa Gosvami Prabhu; yet if they are able to understand that the soothing lotus feet of Sri Dasa Raghunatha Prabhu are the only refuge for their mothers,

fathers, wives, sons, opulences, and respect, then they will achieve devotion to Krsna by the mercy of Sri Yamunacarya. Otherwise they will simply prove their aversion to Hari and rejection of their guru. Acarya Sri Ramanuja has stated:

*vaisnavanam ca janmani nidralasyani yani ca*

*drstva tany aprakasyani janebhya na vadet kvacit*

*tesam dosan vihayasu gunams caiva prakirtayet*

"(For the auspiciousness of the world and the benefit of neophytes:) Even if one knows about a Vaisnava's birth, sleeping habits, and laziness, one should not (in order to proudly criticize) disclose these things in public. Rather than finding faults, one should glorify the Vaisnava's qualities."

The definitions for both Vaisnavas and smartas are given in the Mundaka Upanisad (1.1.4-5 and 3.1.1-3) as follows:

*dve vidye veditavya iti, ha sma yad brahma-vido vadanti,*

*para caivapara ca. tatrapara rg-vedo yajur-vedah sama-vedo 'tharva-vedah*

*siksa kalpo vyakaranam niruktam chando jyotisam iti. atha para yaya tad-aksaram adhigamyate.*

"Saunaka said: There are two kinds of educational systems. The knowers of supreme truth who understand the taste of the Absolute say that one of these kinds of education deals with transcendental knowledge [para vidya] and the other with worldly knowledge [apara vidya]. The Rg Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, Atharva Veda, and their corollaries known as the ritual kalpa scriptures comprised of the sutras and so on, the siksa scriptures explaining the places and methods of pronunciations of letters, the vyakarana grammar scripture teaching the proper use of words, the nirukta scripture teaching the derivation of the meaning of words, the chanda scriptures concerning meters, and the astronomical jyotisa scriptures concerning the correct ascertainment of time-these all belong to the

inferior system of material knowledge [apara vidya]. These are honored by the nondevotees. If one studies these literatures with the spirit of enjoyment, he will simply be bound up as a ritualistic student of the scriptures. That potency of scriptural knowledge by which one can understand the aksara-Brahman or the Absolute Truth-is the higher

education, para-vidya. When a person retires from the worldly conceptions of the smartas, he becomes eligible for para vidya, spiritual education. He then accepts Visnu as his only self-interest, and thus becomes a Vaisnava."

*dva suparna sayuja sakhaya*

*samanam vrksam parisasvajate*

*tayor anyah pippalam svadv atty*

*anasnann anyo 'bhicakasiti*

*samane vrkse puruso nimagno*

*'nisaya socati muhyamanah*

*justam yada pasyaty anyam isam*

*asya mahimanam eti vita-sokah*

*yada pasyah pasyate rukma-varnam*

*kartaram isam purusam brahma-yonim*

*tada vidvan punya-pape vidhuya*

*niranjanah paramam samyam upaiti*

"There are two spiritual birds sitting together in a banyan tree. They are bound together by friendship. One of them is being supported by the other, his supporter. The two spiritual birds are the devotee jiva and the Supreme Lord, both sitting on the same banyan tree of the material body. Of the two, the jiva bird is eating the banyan fruits born from the body as the fruits of its karma, thinking them sweet tasting. The other bird, the



Supreme Lord, does not partake of the fruits Himself but facilitates the eating of the other bird, who is enjoying the fruits.

"One bird (the living entity) considers his material body in terms of 'I' and 'mine.' Having no devotion for the Lord, he is afflicted with lamentation as the result of his karma. In this way, such a karma-kanda smarta, being averse to the service of the Lord, spends his whole life suffering material miseries. But as soon as the living entity gives up his

smarta mentality and his desire for fruitive results, he immediately understands that the other bird, the transcendental Lord Visnu, is distinct from all material enjoyable objects; thus realizing the eternal nature of the Lord's service, he becomes free from lamentation and comes to know the glories of the Lord's pastimes." The platform of Vaisnavism is attained when one realizes that he is an eternal servant of Krsna, and the platform of desirelessness is reached when one gives up the desire for enjoying the fruits of karma. Only when the jiva becomes a Vaisnava does he become pure and liberated.

"When, upon achieving devotion to Visnu, the completely purified jiva realizes his position as servant of the Lord and is able to see the golden-bodied creator of the universe, Hiranyagarbha, then he gains the fruit of higher education. He completely gives up sin and piety, which were born from the worldly mentality of his lower education, and becomes altogether pure and transcendently equal with the Lord."

When a living entity is conditioned, he develops the mentality of a smarta, and when he is liberated, he develops the mentality of a servant of Hari. This is the only purport of the Vedas.

In the Visnu Purana it is stated:

*visnos tu trini rupani purusakhyany atho viduh*

*ekam tu mahatah srastr dvitiam tv anda-samsthitam*

*trtiyam sarva-bhuta-stham yani jnatva vimucyate*

"Lord Narayana has three avatars called purusas. Narayana is the source of the catur-vyuha and the Lord of all Vaikunthalokas, wherein there is no trace of maya. Maya, who is indirectly sheltered by Narayana, is prominent on the other side of the Viraja. Sri Narayana's purusa incarnations manifest for the purpose of empowering Maya's creation of Devi-dhama. The first purusa-avatara is Maha-Visnu, who lies on the Causal Ocean and is the cause of the mahat-tattva and false ego. The second purusa-avatara is Hiranyagarbha Visnu, who lies on the Garbhodaka Ocean and from whose navel grows a lotus stem upon which the guna-avatara Brahma is born and engaged in creating the universe, which is annihilated by the guna-avatara, Rudra. The third purusa-avatara is localised Lord Visnu, who lies on the Ksirodaka Ocean and who is worshipable by all living beings. If a conditioned smarta can serve these three purusa-avatars, he will be

liberated from the clutches of the three modes of nature and become a Vaisnava." Visnu is the eternal master of Maya. Though the purusa-avatars have a relationship with Maya, They are not controlled by Maya like the conditioned souls. Other than the Supreme Lord Visnu, all living entities are eligible for being controlled by Maya, even though they are

constitutionally servants of Visnu. By surrendering to Lord Visnu, the Vaisnavas are no longer eligible to be controlled by Maya. Only nondevotees like the smartas are eligible to be controlled by Maya and forced to accept the results of karma.

In the Skanda Purana, Reva-khanda, Durvasa speaks to Narada as follows:

*nunam bhagavata loke loka-raksa-visaradah  
vrajanti visnunadista hrdis thena maha-mune  
bhagavan eva sarvatra bhutanam krpaya harih  
raksanaya caran lokan bhakta-rupena narada*

"O great sage Narada, pure devotees who are expert in protecting the interest of people wander in this world under the instructions of Lord Visnu, who is situated in everyone's heart. In order to protect the living entities, Lord Hari accepts the form of a devotee and appears in this world out of His causeless mercy."

We can see from the pastimes of Lord Sri Ramacandra that even though He was omnipotent, He acted like a devotee by respecting worldly morality. He did not allow anyone to engage in any kind of illicit activities that people were inclined to; rather He accepted all rules and regulations like an ordinary mortal being. In this way He benefited all the passionate and ignorant living entities.

In the Garuda Purana it is said:

*kalau bhagavatam nama durlabham naiva labhyate  
brahma-rudra-pado tkrstam guruna kathitam mama  
yasya bhagavatam cihnam drsyate tu harir mune  
giyate ca kalau deva jneyas te nasti samsayah*

"Due to their fruitive mentality, the majority of foolish people in Kali-yuga do not come forward to take up the principles of bhagavata-dharma. Therefore pure devotees are very rare. The position of a pure devotee is superior to that of the great demigods like Brahma and Mahadeva. This is what my spiritual master has told me. If one follows the

principles of varnasrama for one hundred lifetimes, as a result of his pious activities he can attain the position of Lord Brahma, but the position of a Vaisnava is more exalted. O sage, know without doubt that anyone in the age of Kali who possesses the symptoms of a pure devotee and constantly engages in chanting the holy names is a godly personality."

In the Skanda Purana it is stated:

*sri-krsna-stava-ratnoghair yesam jihva tv alankrta*

*namasya muni-siddhanam vandaniya divaukasam*

"Those great Vaisnavas whose tongues are decorated with jewel-like prayers to Krsna are respected by the perfected beings, the ascetics, the brahmanas, and the sages and worshipable for the demigods."

According to the materialistic conceptions of the smartas, these statements

are poetic exaggerations. Such a conception, however, is the result of their sinful activities. Due to their offenses at the feet of the

Vaisnavas, they are unable to understand the Vaisnavas' prestigious

position, and instead of glorifying the Vaisnavas, they glorify the status of other fruitive workers. Because the karmis offer obeisances to the perfect sages and worship the highly placed residents of heaven, they are

under the influence of material desires and not interested in the worship of Lord Hari or in the topmost position of Hari's devotees.

It is stated in the Adi Purana:

*vaisnavan bhaja kaunteya ma bhajasvanya-devatah*

"O son of Kunti, worship only the Vaisnavas; do not worship any demigods."

There is no one more worshipable in the heavenly planets, the earthly planets, or in the entire creation than the Vaisnavas. Only karmis with material desires give up the worship of Vaisnavas and, being attached to household life in this miserable material existence, become disinterested in the service of the Vaisnavas. They consider the characteristics of

nondevotees to be superior. This is the result, or punishment, of their karma.

Who are the Hari-janas, or Vaisnavas, and what makes them different from the nondevotees? I am quoting various evidence from the scriptures and sentiments of devotees in this Hari-jana-khanda to answer these questions.

Before acquiring material designations, the living entity is supremely pure. Even though he is not engaged in serving the Supreme Lord, he remains situated in the neutral position of santa-rasa due to his marginal nature. Though the living entity born from the marginal potency does not at that time exhibit a taste for serving the Lord due to a lack of knowledge of self-realization, his direct propensity of serving the Supreme Lord nevertheless remains within him in a dormant state. Though

the indirect propensity of material enjoyment, which is contrary to the service of the Lord, is not found in him at that time, indifference to the service of Hari and the seed of material enjoyment, which follows that state of indifference, are nevertheless present within him. The living entity, who belongs to the marginal potency, cannot remain indifferent forever by subduing both devotional and nondevotional propensities. He therefore contemplates unconstitutional activities from his marginal position. As a sleeping person dreams that he is active in the physical world without actually being involved in activities, when the dormant indifferent living entity of the marginal potency exhibits even a little apathy to the service of the Supreme Lord and situates himself in a neutral, unchanging condition for even a little time, he is infected by

impersonalism. That is why the conditioned soul desires to merge in the impersonal Brahman, thus exhibiting his mind's fickle nature. But due to neglecting the eternal service of the Lord and thereby developing the quality of aversion to the Lord, he cannot remain fixed in that position. In this way aversion to the Lord breaks his concentration of mind and establishes him as the master of this world of enjoyment.

Maya, the external energy of the Supreme Lord, then induces the marginal

living entity to enjoy this world through her covering and throwing potencies and thus shows the living entity the reality of being averse to the Lord's service. At that time the living entity considers himself the king of enjoyers, and being situated in the mode of passion he takes the position of Brahma and creates progeny. The living entities who are born from Brahma, the grandfather of everyone, expand themselves in families of

Aryans and brahmanas. In this world of duality, however, living entities who are covered and thrown under the control of the external energy naturally become envious. This enviousness further creates pride, illusion, greed, anger, and lust and induces the living entities to dance frantically in aversion to the Lord. At that time they forget both that

they were born from Grandfather Brahma and the Lord's instructions in the

Vedas.

And on the platform of progress, if a living entity cultivates transcendental sound vibration and revives the process of remembering the lotus feet of Sri Krsna, he then achieves scientific spiritual knowledge. By this process, all anarthas are destroyed and he becomes situated in a supremely auspicious position.

The mood that arises when one is manipulating his senses is called vilasa, or enjoyment. The meaning of vairagya, or renunciation, is to become averse to the accumulation of sensual knowledge. The conditioned souls who are overwhelmed by the illusory energy of Hari become temporary enjoyers of this world under the control of Maya's covering and throwing potencies. But if such persons fortunately meet devotees who are constantly

remembering Krsna, then they can give up insignificant material enjoyment and receive the opportunity to attain transcendental knowledge.

Although due to forgetfulness of Krsna the perverted movement of the senses

is considered temporary and adverse, when they are properly employed in

eternal subjects their disease of transience is destroyed and they give up the desire to embrace such transient objects. Then that person



appreciates the following verse from the Hari-bhakti-vilasa, which is the mercy of Sri Sanatana and compiled by Srila Gopala Bhatta, the disciple of

Tridandipada Srila Prabodhananda Sarasvati, who was a servant of Sri Gauranga and born in an Andhra brahmana family.

*grhita-visnu-diksako visnu-puja-paro narah*

*vaisnavo 'bhihito 'bhijnair itaro 'smad avaisnavah*

"One who is initiated into Sri Visnu's mantras and who is devoted to worshipping Lord Visnu is called a Vaisnava by those who are learned. One

who is devoid of these practices is not a Vaisnava."

Although the eternal living entity is constitutionally favorably inclined towards the Supreme Lord, due to his indifference towards the eternal service of the Lord he is eligible for being controlled by maya. When one tries to measure material objects with his sensual knowledge, he simply increases his enjoying propensity day after day. That he is eligible for achieving transcendental knowledge-this ancient memory he also often forgets. As a result of being covered and thrown and considering himself

the enjoyer of this world, such a person has no power to discriminate between good and bad, rather he considers temporary and unreal subjects as permanent and favorable for his enjoyment.

In order to eradicate the misfortune of the living entities, who are created by His marginal potency, the most merciful Lord in His forms as the Supersoul and the exalted spiritual master reveals the true identity of the soul. Due to this good fortune, with a small endeavor to achieve transcendental knowledge the conditioned soul gives up his propensity for enjoyment and renunciation and develops some taste for serving the Lord.

If he develops a taste for receiving the mercy of a great liberated personality, who is pure, eternally engaged in service, self-realized, and the only shelter for the living entities, then his lost Krsna consciousness is revived. Thereafter he desires freedom from Maya's covering and throwing potencies and searches after his own auspiciousness.

As a result of this, he attains transcendental knowledge. The desire for achieving transcendental knowledge induces him to cultivate favorable service to Lord Visnu. This cultivation begins with endeavoring for

self-realization, reviving his 1st propensity of service, and, ultimately, being reestablished as the servant of the Lord. Then he is no longer considered a nondevotee, averse to the Lord.

Unfortunate people who are offensive and devoid of service to the spiritual

master and Vaisnavas fall from the highest position and again become enjoyers. They then feel proud of advertising themselves as prakṛta-sahajiyas and become bound by the ropes of material conceptions.

At that time they become totally aloof from following the great devotees and the system of Pancarata. In this way people who thus cheat themselves

become misguided. Thakura Srila Narottama has warned the devotee communities about these pseudo-devotees.

People who follow the principles of the prakṛta-sahajiyas establish themselves as Vaisnavas, and though they fall down according to the opinion of Srimad Bhagavatam (10.2.32), *aruhya krcchrena param padam*, they nevertheless declare that their nonsense activities are the transcendental pastimes of a Vaisnava. Although Srīman Mahāprabhu has said that being proud of one's varṇa or āśrama is the business of the Prakṛti-janas,

because the conditioned souls disregard this instruction of the Lord they become nondevotees, bound by the fruits of their karma. The following

verse, composed by Mahaprabhu and quoted in Padyavali (63), is not recited by such self-deluded persons.

*naham vipro na ca nara-patir*

*napi vaisyo na sudro*

*naham varni na ca grha-patir no vanastho yatir va*

*kintu prodyan-nikhila-paramananda-purnamrtabdher*

*gopi-bhartuh pada-kamalayor dasa-dasanudasah*

"I am a pure spirit soul. I am not a brahmana, I am not a ksatriya, I am not a vaisya or a sudra. Nor am I a brahmacari, a householder, a vanaprastha or a sannyasi. I identify Myself only as the servant of the servant of the servant of the lotus feet of Lord Sri Krsna, the maintainer of the gopis. He is like an ocean of nectar, and He is the cause of universal transcendental bliss. He is always existing with brilliance."

When the four types of liberated persons become weak in their conviction that they are the eternal servants of Krsna, then they again face danger in their path to self-realization. Therefore as soon as a living entity gives up the self-identification of being a Hari-jana, he immediately falls into the category of Prakrti-jana and becomes falsely proud of

himself. Then he can no longer remain a Hari-jana. The Hari-janas who have

lost their devotion to Hari due to forgetfulness of their constitutional position are like sonara pathera batis-"stone bowls made of gold" An expression referring to something that doesn't exist," for they are actually Prakrti-janas or prakṛta-sahajiyas. Their entrance into the natural, transcendental abode of Vaikuntha is checked. The Hari-janas who

have forgotten their constitutional position cannot understand the difference between the transcendently pure Hari-janas and the Prakrti-janas. Due to a lack of real knowledge of the scriptures, they identify persons born in low-class families as Hari-janas and themselves as

Prakrti-janas born in high-class families. In this way they waste their time.

We will now describe the divisions of Hari-janas. Indian historians have collected from various scriptures twelve categories of Hari-janas such as satvata, bhakta, bhagavata, Vaisnava, pancaratika, Vaikhanasa, and karma-hina. But at present all of these categories are practically lost, leaving a rough division of two categories. Those who are devotees of Hari

can still discern the two paths of arcana and bhava. Of the four principal Vaisnava acaryas, Sri Madhvacarya and Sri Nimbadiya are on the path of bh

agavata-marga, or bhava-marga, and Sri Ramanujacarya and Sri Visnusvami are

Vaisnava acaryas on the path of pancaratrika-arcana-marga. Though the respected Sri Madhvacarya and Sri Nimbadiya were bhagavatacaryas, they

nevertheless also accepted the path of arcana, meant for the

kanistha-adhikaris, and Sri Ramanujacarya also accepted the chanting of

the holy names as a part of his arcana rituals. Sri Visnusvami was the

first commentator on the Vedanta-sutras. These four personalities have

been accepted as the four sampradaya acaryas. At this juncture we are

quoting Sridhara Svami's commentary on the beginning of the Third Canto of

the Srimad Bhagavatam.

*dvedha hi bhagavata-sampradaya-pravrttih. ekatah*

*sanksepatah sri-narayanad brahma-naradadi-dvarena. anyatas tu  
vistaratah*

*sesat sanat-kumara-sankhyayanadi-dvarena.*

"There are two ways in which the Vaisnava sampradayas originated. The

first

of these has come from Narayana by way of Brahma, Narada, and so on. The

other comes from Lord Sesa through Sanat-kumara and then Sankhyayana

Muni."

Needless to say, the personalities in the above-mentioned sampradayas are

all Vaisnavas. As confirmed in the Padma Purana, Uttara-khanda, in the following words:

*yad visnupasana nityam visnur yasyesvaro mune*

*pujyo yasaiko visnuh syad isto loke sa vaisnavah*

"O sage, one who always worships Lord Visnu and whose eternal Lord, only

object of worship, and goal of life is Visnu is known in this world as a Vaisnava."

Actually, the categories of Hari-janas are established according to two principal tastes. We should refer to the analysis of the two categories,

pancaratrika and bhagavata, given by Sripada Jiva Gosvami Prabhu in his

Sri Bhakti-sandarbha. It is stated in the Srimad Bhagavatam (12.3.52) as follows:

*krte yad dhyayato visnum tretayam yajato makhaih  
dvapare paricaryayam kalau tad dhari-kirtanat*

"Whatever result was obtained in Satya-yuga by meditating on Visnu, in Treta-yuga by performing sacrifices, and in Dvapara-yuga by serving the Lord's lotus feet can be obtained in Kali-yuga simply by chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra."

We are herein citing evidence from the Sri Narayana-samhita quoted by Srimad Acarya Anandatirtha Purnaprajna Madhva Muni in his commentary on the Mundaka Upanisad while teaching the bhagavata-marga to the fallen souls of Kali-yuga:

*dvapariyair janair visnuh pancaratrais tu kevalaih  
kalau tu nama-matrena pujiyate bhagavan harih*



"The people of Dvapara-yuga worshiped Hari through the system of pancaratrika, but in the present age of Kali, rather than following the process of Dvapara-yuga, one can worship Lord Hari only by chanting His holy names."

Although Srimad Anandatirtha did not mention the process of pancaratrika in his Brahma-sutra commentary, he has not disregarded the glories of the

Pancarattras in his other commentary, the Anuvyakhyana, which he wrote for

refuting opposing opinions. It is only some less intelligent people who consider Sri Madhva Muni as averse to the pancaratrika system.

The pancaratrikas are inclined to the path of arcana, and the bhagavatas are inclined to kirtana. In his Bhakti-sandarbha and Krama-sandarbha commentary on Srimad Bhagavatam (7.5.23) Sri Jiva Prabhu has stated:

arcana-marge sraddha cet, asrita-mantra-gurus tam visesatah prcchet.  
yadyapi sri bhagavata-mate pancatradi-va arcana-  
margasyavasyakatvam nasti, tad vinapi saranapatty-adinam ekatarenapi  
purusartha-siddher abhihitatvat, tathapi sri-naradadi-vartmanusaradbhih.  
krtayam diksayam arcanam avasyam kriyetaiva. para-dvara tat-  
sampadanam vyavahara-nisthatvasyalastvasya va pratipadakam. tato  
'sraddha-mayatvad dhinam eva tat. mantra-diksady-apeksa yady api

svarupato nasti tathapi prayah svabhavato dehadhi-sambandhena  
kadarya-silanam viksipta-cittanam jananam tat-tat-sankoci-karanaya  
srimad-rsi-prabhrtibhir atrarcana-marge kvacit kvacit kacit kacin maryada  
sthapitasti. tatra tat-tad-apeksa nasti; ramarcana-candrikayam-vinaiva  
diksam viprendra purascaryam vinaiva hi/ vinaiva nyasa-vidhina japa-  
matrena siddhida.

"If a Vaisnava sadhaka develops faith for the path of arcana, which is  
meant for the followers of the pancaratrika system, then he should  
exhaustively inquire about that path from the pancaratrika guru who gave  
him mantra. It is said that even without arcana, by following any of the  
nine processes of devotional service, headed by surrender, one can  
attain  
perfection. So although according to the opinion of Srīmad Bhagavatam  
there is no need for the arcana-marga, which is the only process for the  
followers of the pancaratrika system, if one is initiated by a Vaisnava  
guru who is following the footsteps of personalities like Śrī Narada, who  
is also a pancaratrika, then he must engage in the arcana of Lord Viṣṇu  
with the mantras that he received from his spiritual master. To employ  
others in arcana on one's behalf simply confirms one's lack of conviction  
or laziness in one's duties. Therefore engaging others in arcana on one's  
behalf is a sign of faithlessness and is thus unacceptable. Although the  
bhagavata Vainavas do not actually need pancaratrika-mantra-dikṣa,

pancaratrika sages like Sri Narada have in some places given some importance to arcana in order to help regulate the loose character and restless minds of the people. There is no need for the support of arcana and so on, as stated in the Ramarcana-candrika: O best of the brahmanas, even without diksa, purascarya, and nyasa-vidhi, simply by chanting the mantras of the Supreme Lord one achieves all perfection."

And in the Bhakti-sandarbha, Sri Jiva Prabhu says:

*tatah prema-taratamyena bhakta-mahattva-taratamyam  
mukhyam. yair lingaih sa bhagavatah priya uttama-madhyamatadi-vivikto  
bhavati tani lingani. tatraiva arcana-marge tri-vidhatvam labhyate.  
padmottara-khandoktam mahatvam tu arcana-marga-paranam madhya  
eva jneyam.*

"Next, we consider that a Vaisnava is known as an uttama, madhyama, or

kanistha primarily according to his advancement in love of God. The symptoms for differentiating the kanistha, madhyama, and uttama devotees,

which reveal whether one is dear, more dear, or most dear to the Lord, are

all criterion for establishing the position of devotees. In the pancaratrika-arcana-marga there are three categories of devotees. The glories of the Vaisnavas mentioned in the Padma Purana, Uttara-khanda, refer only to the followers of the pancaratrika-arcana-marga.

*tatra mahattvam-*

*tapadi panca-samskari navejya-karma-karakah*

*artha-pancaka-vid vipro maha-bhagavatah smrtah*

"The characteristics of the uttama or maha-bhagavata according to the arcana-marga are as follows: `A brahmana who has undergone the five kinds

of samskaras, or purificatory processes, like tapa, who has executed the rituals of worship, and who has understood the Artha-pancaka - a book dealing with five kinds of knowledge. It will be explained in the following pages. is called a maha-bhagavata.'

*madhyamatvam-*

*tapah pundram tatha nama mantro yagas ca pancamah*

*ami hi panca-samskarah paramaikanti-hetarvah*

"The characteristics of the madhyama according to the pancaratrika-arcana-marga are as follows: `The five kinds of samskaras are tapa, pundra, nama, mantra, and japa. According to the pancaratrika teachings, one who performs these five activities is called a madhyama-bhagavata.'

*tatra kanisthatvam-*

*sankha-cakrady-urdhva-pundra- dharanady-atma-laksanam*

*tan-namaskaranam caiva vaisnavatvam ihocyate*

"The characteristics of the kanistha according to the pancaratrika-arcana-marga are as follows: `One who marks his body with the four signs of Visnu-the conchshell, cakra, club, and lotus-and who offers obeisances to other Vaisnavas whose bodies are marked with these signs is called a kanistha.'

"Apart from the pancaratrika system, we are now presenting the mental symptoms of a maha-bhagavata according to the bhava-marga, as stated in the Srimad Bhagavatam (11.2.45):

*sarva-bhutesu yah pasyed bhagavad-bhavam atmanah*

*bhutani bhagavaty atmany esa bhagavatottamah*

"Sri Havir said: The most advanced devotee, or maha-bhagavata, sees within

everything the soul of all souls, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krsna. Consequently he sees everything in relation to the Supreme Lord and

understands that everything that exists is eternally situated within the Lord." The impersonalists, who consider the living entity and the Supreme

Lord as one, are opposed to the principle of this Srimad Bhagavatam verse.

To consider the conditioned living entities as equal to the Supreme Lord is extremely contrary to the principles of devotional service and to the real nature of maha-bhagavatas. The mood of the damsels of Vraja found in

the Srimad Bhagavatam (10.35.9-vana-latas tarava atmani), (10.21.15-nadyas

tada tad upadharya), and (10.90.15-kuravi vilapasi) indicate the mood of a

maha-bhagavata.

"Now the specific mental symptoms of a madhyama-bhagavata are being described in the Srimad Bhagavatam (11.2.46) as follows:

*isvare tad-adhinesu balisesu dvisatsu ca*

*prema-maitri-krpopeksa yah karoti sa madhyamah*

"An intermediate or second-class devotee, called madhyama-adhikari, offers

his love to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is a sincere friend to all

the devotees of the Lord, shows mercy to ignorant people who are innocent

and disregards those who are envious of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.'

"Next, the Srimad Bhagavatam (11.2.47) describes the symptoms of a kanistha

in terms of his body symptoms of executing bhagavad-dharma and also somewhat in terms of his mentality in the following words:

*arcayam eva haraye pujam yah sraddhayehate*

*na tad-bhaktesu canyesu sa bhaktah prakrtah smrtah*

"A devotee who faithfully engages in the worship of the Deity in the temple but does not behave properly toward other devotees or people in

general is called a prakṛta-bhakta, a materialistic devotee, and is considered to be in the lowest position." The yasyatma-buddhiḥ verse is applicable to such persons.

Prabhupada Srila Jiva Gosvami and other Viṣṇupada acaryas who are completely dependent on the lotus feet of Sri Sri Gaura are all worshipers on the path of bhava in accordance with the philosophy of Śrīmad Bhagavatam. Among the followers of Sri Gaura, the bhava path is adhered to

rather than the pañcarātrika-arcana path, which is followed only to some extent in the Deity worship of the kaniṣṭha devotees. Sri Lakṣmi Puri and Sri Śrīmad Viṣṇupada Madhavendra Puri, who were disciplic descendants of

Śrīmad Acārya Anandatīrtha Purnaprajña Madhvaṇṇa, were adherents of the

pure bhagavata system on the path of bhava-mārga. From Sri Madhavendra

Puri, bhagavata-dharma on the path of bhava has become completely manifested among the followers of Sri Caitanya. Although the bhagavata-mārga propounded by Sri Madhvacārya has also been accepted by

the acaryas in his disciplic succession like Sri Vyāsa Rāya, Sri Raghavendra Yati, and Sri Vijayadhvaṇṇa as well as the acaryas of the



mathas of Udupi like Krsnapura, Puttugi, Sode, Pejavara, Aghanadu, Kannura,

Palanadu and also the temple authorities of Kudambara, Cikka, and Manakatti, these persons were nevertheless followers of the principles of varnasrama in the pancaratrika-arcana-marga.

Sri Jivapada has quoted the following verse in reference to the ninefold procedure for worshiping the Deity according to the pancaratrika system:

*arcanam mantra-pathanam yogo yago hi vandanam  
nama-sankirtanam seva tac-cinhair ankanam tatha  
tadiyaradhanam cejya navadha bhidyate subhe*

"O most auspicious lady, the nine aspects of Deity worship are offering puja, chanting mantras, meditation, fire sacrifices, praying, chanting the holy names, serving, marking the body with auspicious signs, and worshiping the Vaisnavas."

Explaining the "five objects" of worship (artha-pancaka), Sri Jiva Gosvami Prabhupada has said: upasyah sri bhagavan, tat paramam padam, tad-dravyam,

tan-mantro, jivatma ceti panca-tattva-jnatrtvam artha-panca-kavitvam-  
"The

worshipable Supreme Lord, His supreme abode of Vaikuntha, His assets  
or

tadiya the pure devotees, His mantras, and the living entities-to know  
these five subjects is knowledge of artha-pancaka."

Kuresa, a disciple of Sri Ramanuja, had a son named Parasara Bhatta. A  
disciple of Parasara was Vedanti, whose disciple was Nambur  
Varadaraja.

The disciple of Nambur Varadaraja was Pillai Lokacarya, who wrote a  
book

named Artha-pancaka. The five subjects described by him are different  
from

those described by Sri Jivapada. He has described the subject of

jiva-svarupa (the essential characteristics of the living entity) as

having five divisions-nitya (eternal), mukta (liberated), baddha

(conditioned), kevala (merged in Brahman), and mumuksu (desiring

liberation); the subject of isvara-svarupa (the essential characteristics

of the Supreme Lord) as having five divisions-para (His original form as

Krsna), vyuha (His quadruple expansions), vibhava (His pastime forms),

antaryami (the Supersoul), and arcanavatara (the Deity incarnation); the

subject of purusartha-svarupa (the essential characteristics of the goal

of life) as having five divisions-dharma (religiousity), artha (economic development), kama (sense gratification), atmanubhava (self-realization), and bhavagad-anubhava (God-realization); the subject of upaya-svarupa (the characteristics of the means of attainment) as having five divisions-karma (fruitive activities), jnana (cultivation of knowledge), bhakti (devotional service), prapatti (taking shelter), and acaryabhimana (assuming the role of a spiritual master); and the subject of virodhi-svarupa (the characteristics of impediments) as having five divisions-svarupa-virodhi (obstacles in self-realization), p aratattva-virodhi (obstacles in God-realization), purusartha-virodhi (obstacles in attaining the goal of life), upaya-virodhi (obstacles in the means of attainment), and prapya-virodhi (obstacles in attaining the desired results). In this way, he has described twenty-five different items.

The pancaratrika Vaisnava principles of medieval South India have to some

extent entered within the current practices of the Gaudiya Vaisnavas.

Descendants of the Gaudiya Vaisnava acaryas became more or less attached

to the path of arcana, like the followers of the Pancaratras, and spread

subordination to Sriman Mahaprabhu sometimes in its pure form but more

often in a perverted form. Like the householder acaryas of the

Ramanuja-sampradaya who are addressed as Svamis, Gaudiya householder

acaryas have similarly accepted the title of Gosvami. While preaching the

pure path of bhava explained in the Srimad Bhagavatam, Sriman Mahaprabhu

distinguished it from mundane formalities, but in due course of time His

teachings have become distorted into a branch of the pancaratrika system.

This, however, is not the purpose of Sriman Mahaprabhu's pure preaching.

Although the followers of Ramanuja and Madhva have remained distinct from

the Sankara-sampradaya, whose followers are known as pancopasakas, or

worshipers of five gods, the Gaudiya-sampradaya of North India was unable

to remain aloof from the pancopasakas' influence and took to the service

of such people, who are averse to Vaisnavas. Actually the arrangement for

arcana in the path of bhava is not completely in agreement with that found

in the pancaratrika system. The kanistha-adhikaris in the bhava-marga explained in the Srimad Bhagavatam are practically equal to the maha-bhagavatas of the pancaratrika-arcana-marga, although there is some difference. When these kanistha-adhikaris advance further, they attain the position of madhyama-adhikaris. And when the madhyama-adhikaris advance further, they attain the position of maha-bhagavatas, or paramahamsas.

Sri Jiva Gosvami has quoted the following eight verses from the Srimad

Bhagavatam (11.2.48-55) to explain the position of the maha-bhagavatas:

*grhitvapindriyair arthan yo na dvesti na hrsyati*

*visnor mayam idam pasyan sa vai bhagavatottamah*

"Unlike the kanistha-adhikari with a materialistic mentality, who engages his senses in enjoying their objects, the person who sees this variegated world as a creation of the illusory energy of Lord Visnu is neither attracted nor repulsed while engaging his senses with their objects. He is indeed the greatest among devotees." This definition is in terms of both

mental and physical disposition.

*dehendriya-prana-mano-dhiyam yo*

*janmapyaya-ksud-bhaya-tarsa-krcchraih*

*samsara-dharmair avimuhyaamanah*

*smrtya harer bhagavata-pradhanah*

"One who simply by remembering the lotus feet of Lord Hari is no longer attached to the five objects of body, senses, life air, mind, and intelligence and who is thus no longer entangled in the miseries of birth, death, hunger, fear, and thirst is to be considered a maha-bhagavata, a foremost devotee of the Lord.

*na kama-karma-bijanam yasya cetasi sambhava*

*vasudevaika-nilayah sa vai bhagavatottamah*

"The seed of lusty desires cannot fructify in the heart of one who is fixed in the service of the Supreme Lord and completely peaceful because he has

taken shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord. Such a person is considered a pradhana Vaisnava, or topmost devotee of the Lord.

*na yasya janma-karmabhyam na varnasrama-jatibhih*

*sajjate 'sminn aham-bhavo dehe vai sa hareh priyah*

"If one does not become proud of one's material body made of skin and flesh

in spite of taking an aristocratic birth such as that of a brahmana, executing pious activities like giving and accepting charity, and having a prestigious position within varnasrama society, then one is to be considered the dearmost servitor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

*na yasya svah para iti vittesv atmani va bhida*

*sarva-bhuta-samah santah sa vai bhagavatottamah*

"One who sees no distinction of `own' and `others' in terms of his body and

wealth, who treats all living beings equally, and who is always peaceful is considered to be a maha-bhagavata.

*tri-bhuvana-vibhava-hetave 'py akuntha-*

*smrtir ajitatma-suradibhir vimrgyat*

*na calati bhagavat-padaravindal*

*lava-nimisardham api yah sa vaisnavagryah*

"One whose mind cannot be distracted from the lotus feet of Krsna for even

a single moment even if he achieves the benediction of ruling and enjoying

the opulence of the entire universe, which the demigods whose hearts are

dedicated to Lord Ajita aspire for, is to be considered vaisnava-pradhana, the best of the Vaisnavas.

*bhagavata uru-vikramanghri-sakha-*

*nakha-mani-candrikaya nirasta-tape*

*hrdi katham upasidatam punah sa*

*prabhavati candra ivodite 'rka-tapah*

"A person who is afflicted by the burning heat of the sun experiences no pain from the cooling moonshine. So how can the fire of material suffering

again burn one's heart when it has been cooled by the rays emanating from

the jewel-like nails of the most powerful lotus feet of the Supreme Lord?



Such a person is a maha-bhagavata.

*visrjati hrdayam na yasya saksad  
dharir avasabhihito 'py aghaughana-nasah  
pranaya-rasanaya dhrtanghri-padmah  
sa bhavati bhagavata-pradhana uktah*

"If one even unintentionally utters the names of Lord Hari, all his sinful reactions are destroyed. That Supreme Lord Hari never leaves the heart of

one who has captured His lotus feet with love. Such a person is to be known as maha-bhagavata, the most exalted devotee of the Lord."

The classification of Vaisnavas established in the Brahma-vaivarta Purana,

Krsna-janma-khanda, Chapter 84, cannot be accepted as the same as the

pancaratrika system of classification.

The Brahma-vaivarta Purana presents the characteristics of topmost devotees

as follows:

*trna-sayya-rato bhakto man-nama-guna-kirtisu  
mano nivesayet tyaktva samsara-sukha-karanam  
dhyayate mat-padabjam ca pujayed bhakti-bhavatah  
sarva-siddham na vancanti te 'nimadikam ipsitam  
brahmatvam amaratvam va suratvam sukha-karanam  
dasyam vina na hicchanti salokyadi-catustayam  
naiva nirvana-muktim ca sudha-panam abhipsitam  
vancati niscalam bhaktim madiyam atulam api  
stri-pum-vibhedo nasty evam sarva-jivesv abhinnata  
ksut-pipasadikam nidram lobha-mohadikam ripum  
tyaktva diva-nisam mam ca dhyayate ca dig-ambarah*

"My devotees give up the sources of material pleasure, sleep on straw mats,

engage their minds in glorifying My names and qualities, and devotedly worship My lotus feet within their hearts. They do not desire to achieve any mystic perfections like anima. They do not desire happiness derived from becoming a demigod, an immortal, or Lord Brahma. If they cannot be

situated in My service, they do not even want perfections like living on

the same planet with Me. They do not desire to drink nectar, nor do they desire the liberation of nirvana. My devotees pray only for incomparable and undeviating devotional service at My lotus feet. They do not discriminate between men and women, and they treat all living entities equally. Becoming free from the enemies headed by hunger, thirst, sleep, greed, and illusion, they go without clothing and meditate day and night on Me. These are the symptoms of *uttama Vaisnavas*."

Characteristics of the intermediate Vaisnava:

*nasaktah karmasu grhi purva-praktanatah sucih  
karoti satatam caiva purva-karma-nikrntanam  
na karoty aparam yatnat sankalpa-rahitas ca sah  
sarvam krsnasya yat kincin naham karta ca karmanah  
karmana manasa vaca satatam cintayed iti*

"The *madhyama-adhikari* is already purified as the result of the pious deeds

of his previous life, and although he lives at home he remains unattached.

Everything he does simply helps diminish the reactions of his past

activities. He is devoid of material desires and is careful to avoid accumulating further karmic reactions. The conviction that 'Everything belongs to Krsna; I am not the doer,' is apparent in his thoughts, speech, and actions."

Characteristics of the neophyte Vaisnava:

*nyuna-bhaktas ca tan-nyunah sa ca praktikah srutau  
yamam va yama-dutam va svapne sa ca na pasyati  
purasanam sahasram ca purva-bhaktah samuddharet  
pumsam satam madhyamam ca tac caturtham ca praktah*

"The kanistha-adhikari is inferior to the madhyama-adhikari. He has material misconceptions even about hearing topics of Hari, yet he also does not see Yamaraja or his servants even in his dreams. The uttama-adhikari is capable of delivering one thousand generations of his ancestors, the madhyama-adhikari is capable of delivering one hundred generations, and the kanistha-adhikari is capable of delivering only four generations."

Although a shadow of indirect devotional service is found among some pancaratrika Vaisnavas, they will also come to the stage of uttama-adhikari by their gradual advancement. In the opinion of Srimad Bhagavatam, only devotional service that is pure, unalloyed, and devoid of material desires is acceptable. It is a fact that the followers of the Pancaratras also use the word aikantika, or unalloyed, to describe their devotional service, but because they have accepted the support of karma and jnana in their process of worship, such a process cannot be compared with the pure devotional service preached by Sri Caitanyacandra.

In his commentary on Sri Jiva Gosvami's Tattva-sandarbha, Srimad Baladeva

Vidyabhusana Prabhu, who is known as the Gaudiya Vaisnava Vedantacarya,

has pointed out four differences with the South Indian Vaisnava followers of Madhvacarya in these words:

*bhaktanam vipranam eva moksah, devah bhaktesu mukhyah,  
virincasyaiva sayujyam, laksmya jiva-kotitvam ity evam mata-visesah  
daksinadi-deseti tena gaude 'pi madhavendradayas tad upasisyah katicid*

*babhuvur ity arthah.*

Sri Vidyabhusana Prabhu has found the following four teachings in the philosophy of Madhvacarya to be unacceptable to the Gaudiya Vaisnavas:

Only a brahmana devotee is eligible for liberation, the demigods are the foremost devotees, Lord Brahma attains sayujya-mukti (merging in Brahman),

and Laksmidevi is included among the jivas. Nevertheless Sri Madhavendra

Puri and a number of others in Bengal became followers of Madhvacarya's

prema-bhakti line.

Sri Jiva Gosvamipada has mentioned the names of Sri Vijayadhvaja and Vyasa

Tirtha, who were among the South Indian disciples of Sri Madhvacarya in the Tattvavada school. He said that the Gaudiya Vaisnavas from Sripada Jayatirtha to Sri Madhavendra Puripada were all in the line of

prema-bhakti. Vidyadhiraja, the disciple of Sripada Jayatirtha, Rajendra

Tirtha, the disciple of Vidyadhiraja, and his disciple, Vijayadhvaja, all

appeared in the middle of the fifteenth century. Purusottama, the disciple

of Vijayadhvaja, had a disciple named Subrahmanya, whose disciple was

Vyasa Tirtha. Vyasa Tirtha lived from 1548 to 1598 A.D., so he was a contemporary of Sri Jiva Gosvami.

This Tattvavada, or pancaratrika system, is not acceptable in the opinion of Srīman Mahāprabhu. Rather, He taught the path of bhagavata-marga. When

Srī Gaurasundara, the Lord of Goloka worshipable throughout the fourteen

worlds, visited the principal matha in the village of Udupi in the district of Mangalore in the year 1511, Srī Raghuvāya Tirtha was the matha commander. There is a description of Lord Caitanya's visit in Srī Caitanya-caritamṛta (Madhya-līla, Chapter 9) as follows:

*tattvavadi acarya-saba sastrete pravina  
tanre prasna kaila prabhu hana yena dina*

"The chief acarya of the Tattvavada community was very learned in the revealed scriptures. Srī Caitanya Mahāprabhu humbly questioned him.

*sadhya-sadhana ami na jani bhala-mate  
sadhya-sadhana-srestha janaha amate*

"Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, 'I do not know very well the aim of life and how

to achieve it. Please tell Me of the best ideal for humanity and how to attain it.'

*acarya kahe, -`varnasrama-dharma, krsne samarpana'*

*ei haya krsna-bhaktera srestha `sadhana'*

"The acarya replied, 'When the activities of the four castes and the four asramas are dedicated to Krsna, they constitute the best means whereby one can attain the highest goal of life.

*`panca-vidha mukti' pana vaikunthe gamana*

*`sadhya-srestha' haya, -ei sastra-nirupana*

"'When one dedicates the duties of varnasrama-dharma to Krsna, he is eligible for five kinds of liberation. Thus he is transferred to the spiritual world in Vaikuntha. This is the highest goal of life and the verdict of all revealed scriptures.'



*prabhu kahe,-sastre kahe sravana-kirtana*  
*krsna-prema-seva-phalera `parama-sadhana'*

"Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, `According to the verdict of the sastras, the process of hearing and chanting is the best means to attain loving service to Krsna.

*sravana-kirtana ha-ite krsne haya `prema'*  
*sei pancama purusartha-purusarthera sima*

"`When one comes to the platform of loving service to Lord Krsna by executing these nine processes beginning with hearing and chanting, he has attained the fifth platform of success and the limit of life's goals.

*karma-ninda, karma-tyaga, sarva-sastre kahe*  
*karma haite prema-bhakti krsne kabhu nahe*

"`In every revealed scripture there is condemnation of fruitive activities. It is advised everywhere to give up engagement in fruitive activities, for

by executing them no one can attain the highest goal of life, love of Godhead.

*panca-vidha mukti tyaga kare bhakta-gana*  
*phalgu kari' `mukti' dekhe narakera sama*

"Pure devotees reject the five kinds of liberation; indeed, for them liberation is very insignificant because they see it as hellish.

*mukti, karma-dui vastu tyaje bhakta-gana*  
*sei dui sthapa' tumi `sadhya', `sadhana'*

"Both liberation and fruitive activity are rejected by devotees. You are trying to establish these things as life's goal and the process for attaining it.'

*prabhu kahe, -karmi, jnani, -dui bhakti-hina*  
*tomara sampradaye dekhi sei dui cihna*

"Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, `Both the fruitive worker and the

speculative philosopher are considered nondevotees. We see both elements

present in your sampradaya."

It is further stated in the Antya-lila, Chapter Five:

*ara eka `svabhava' gaurera suna, bhakta-gana  
aisvarya-svabhava gudha kare prakatana*

"There is yet another characteristic of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. O devotees, listen carefully to how He manifests His opulence and characteristics, although they are exceptionally deep.

*sannyasi pandita-ganera karite garva nasa  
nica-sudra-dvara karena dharmera prakasa*

"To vanquish the false pride of so-called renunciants and learned scholars,

He spreads real religious principles, even through a sudra, or lowborn fourth-class man.

*`bhakti', `prema', `tattva' kahe raye kari' `vakta'*

*apani pradyumna-misra-saha haya `srota'*

"Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu preached about devotional service, ecstatic love

and the Absolute Truth by making Ramananda Raya, a grhastha born in a low

family, the speaker. Then Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu Himself, the exalted brahmana-sannyasi, and Pradyumna Misra, the purified brahmana, both became

the hearers of Ramananda Raya.

*haridasa-dvara nama-mahatmya-prakasa*

*sanatana-dvara bhakti-siddhanta-vilasa*

"Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu exhibited the glories of the holy name of the Lord

through Haridasa Thakura, who was born in a Mohammedan family. Similarly,

He exhibited the essence of devotional service through Sanatana Gosvami,

who had almost been converted into a Mohammedan.

*sri-rupa-dvara vrajera prema-rasa-lila*

*ke bujhite pare gambhira caitanyera khela?*

"The Lord also fully exhibited the ecstatic love and transcendental pastimes of Vrndavana through Srila Rupa Gosvami. Considering all this, who can understand the deep plans of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu?"

It is not only the sampradaya acaryas who mistakenly compare the principles

of karma-kanda like following varnasrama with devotional service like

hearing and chanting, there are also nondevotee sampradayas opposed to the

principles of devotional service who consider their misconceptions and

various devices that bind them to material existence as Vaisnava

practices. Though such persons claim to be Vaisnavas according to their

own definition, Vaisnavas who are liberated from material designations

know that they are attached to material designations. In his

Bhakti-sandarbha, Sri Jiva Gosvami Prabhupada has quoted various sources

to describe a few categories of such Vaisnavas as follows:

*skande-dharmartham jivitam yesam santanartham ca maithunam*

*pacanam vipra-mukhyartham jneyas te vaisnava narah  
visnu purane-na calati nija-varna-dharmato yah  
sama-matir atma-suhrt-vipaksa-pakse  
na harati na ca hanti kincid uccaih  
sthita-manasam tam avehi visnu-bhaktam  
padme-jivitam yasya dharmarthe dharmo hary-artham eva ca  
aho-ratrani punyartham tam manye vaisnavam janam  
brhan-naradiye-sive ca paramesane visnau ca paramatmani  
sama-buddhya pravartante te vai bhagavatottamah*

"In the Skanda Purana it is said: `According to the fruitive workers, Vaisnavas are those whose lives are dedicated to following religious principles, whose sex life is meant for begetting children, and whose cooking is for satisfying the best of the brahmanas.'

"In the Visnu Purana it is said: `A Vaisnava is one who considers his actions are in accordance with the order of Lord Visnu. He who does not deviate from the principles of his varna and asrama, who treats his friends and enemies equally, and who neither destroys nor steals anything-such a sober person is a devotee of Visnu.'

"Becoming a Vaisnava by offering the fruits of one's karma to the Lord is explained in the Padma Purana as follows: `One whose life is dedicated to following religious principles, whose religious principles are dedicated for the pleasure of the Supreme Lord, and whose days and nights are passed in accumulating pious activities is known as a Vaisnava.'

"The symptoms of a uttama-adhikari according to the Saivites are given in the Brhan-naradiya Purana as follows: `Those who accept Lord Siva, the chief of the demigods, as equal to Lord Visnu, the Supersoul, are considered maha-bhagavatas.'"

Other similar statements are found in scriptures that are meant for pseudo-devotees and devotees who do not know how to practically apply the principles of devotional service. Actually, apart from unalloyed devotional service, all other activities of this material world fall under the categories of either impure devotional service or fruitive work with desires for the results. All such activities are subject to change,

temporary, and contemptible. The imagined qualities of Vaisnavas and devotional service that the karmis, jnanis, and sense enjoyers claim to be supreme according to their respective tastes are unscientific, imprudent, and mere products of ignorance that are situated far away from pure devotional service.

In this connection, one naturally thinks about the statements made by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the purifier of the entire world, Sri Mahaprabhu, regarding the identity of Sri Visnupada Prabhuvara Srimad Raghunatha dasa Gosvami, who was the treasure of Mahaprabhu's heart and a mountain of transcendental opulences. These statements are found in Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta, Antya-līla, Chapter Six, as follows:

*tomara bapa-jyetha-visaya-vistha-gartera kida  
sukha kari' mane visaya-visera maha-pida  
yadyadi brahmanya kare, brahmanera sahaya  
'suddha-vaisnava' nahe, haye 'vaisnavera praya'  
tathapi visayera svabhava-kare maha-andha  
sei karma karaya, yate haya bhava-bandha*



"My dear Raghunatha dasa, your father and his elder brother are just like worms in stool in the ditch of material enjoyment, for the great disease of the poison of material enjoyment is what they consider happiness. Although your father and uncle are charitable to brahmanas and greatly help them, they are nevertheless not pure Vaisnavas. However, they are almost like Vaisnavas. Those who are attached to materialistic life and are blind to spiritual life must act in such a way that they are bound to repeated birth and death by the actions and reactions of their activities."

In the process of ascertaining who is a Vaisnava, many people misidentify

one who is almost a Vaisnava as a real Vaisnava. Materialists and karmis are not included among the pure Vaisnavas. Seeing their mundane endeavors,

great personalities who are conversant in devotional scriptures call them vaisnava-praya, almost Vaisnavas. They never make the mistake of regarding

them as real Vaisnavas. Since we will discuss the behavior and dealings of

Vaisnavas in a separate chapter, we will not elaborate on this point at present.

By discussing the different grades of Vaisnavas, we have now been able to

understand the different degrees of Vaisnavism. When one gives up the materialist mentality of being covered by the conceptions of whimsical sense enjoyment, karma, and jnana and favorably cultivates attraction to Krsna, this is called pure devotional service. One whose heart is naturally fixed in this principle is a pure devotee. The glories of such pure devotees have already been quoted from the Srimad Bhagavatam. The

conclusion that is given by Sri Mahaprabhu's dearmost servant, Sri Sri Visnupada Srimad Rupa Gosvami Prabhupada, whose heart is nondifferent from

that of Sri Mahaprabhu, in his essay, Sri Upadesamrta, must be followed by

all pure Vaisnavas.

*krsneti yasya giri tam manasadriyeta*

*diksasti cet pranatibhis ca bhajantam isam*

*susrusaya bhajana-vijnam ananyam anya-*

*nindadi-sunya-hrdam ipsita-sanga-labdhya*

"One should mentally honor the devotee who chants the holy name of Lord

Kṛṣṇa, one should offer humble obeisances to the devotee who has undergone

spiritual initiation [dikṣa] and is engaged in worshiping the Deity, and

one should associate with and faithfully serve that pure devotee who is

advanced in undeviated devotional service and whose heart is completely

devoid of the propensity to criticize others."

Citing the authority of the Pancaratra-agamas in his Bhakti-sandarbhā, Śrī

Jīva Gosvāmī Prabhu has stated:

*divyam jñanam yato dadyat kuryat papasya sanksayam*

*tasmad dikṣeti sa prokta desikais tattva-kovidaiḥ*

"Dikṣa is the process by which transcendental knowledge is awakened and all

reactions caused by sinful activity are vanquished. Learned persons who

are expert in the study of the revealed scriptures declare this process to

be called dikṣa."

A spiritual master who gives mantra, assists one in spiritual realization rather than increasing one's material knowledge, and is able to destroy all illicit endeavors for sinful activities is a real initiating spiritual master, and those who take shelter of him are his initiated disciples. The instructions given to Mayadevi by Namacarya Srila Thakura Haridasa Prabhu, the king of devotees, regarding spiritual initiation are described in Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta (Antya 3.240-241) as follows:

*sankhya-nama-sankirtana-ei 'maha-yajna' manye  
tahate dikṣita ami ha-i prati-dine  
yavat kirtana samapta nahe, na kari anya kama  
kirtana samapta haile, haya dikṣara visrama*

"I have been initiated into a vow to perform a great sacrifice by chanting the holy name a certain number of times every day. As long as the vow to chant is unfulfilled, I do not desire anything else. When I finish my chanting, then I have an opportunity to do anything."

Unless one becomes qualified as a sacrificial brahmana in the sacrifice of chanting the holy names, the name of Kṛṣṇa does not manifest. Although

Thakura Haridasa Prabhu was not a seminal or Vedic brahmana, he attained

the position of a qualified initiated brahmana:

*koti-nama-grahana-yajna kari eka-mase*

*ei diksa kariyachi, haila asi' sese*

"I have vowed to chant ten million names in a month. I have taken this vow,

but now it is nearing its end."

A madhyama-adhikari should mentally show respect to the kanistha-adhikari

who is properly initiated and engaged in chanting the holy names of Krsna.

One who has surpassed the stage of kanistha-adhikara through the process

of chanting the holy names and who engages in worshiping the Supreme Lord

with transcendental realization, such a madhyama-adhikari should be

offered respectful obeisances and his guidance should be followed. And one

who is constantly engaged in worshiping Krsna with transcendental realiza

tion, who has completely given up aversion to Hari, and who does not condemn even those who are envious of Hari-such a maha-bhagavata should be respectfully served with the conviction that his association is most desirable.

A Vaisnava whose life has become successful by taking initiation has no false ego. Sri Jiva Gosvami Prabhu quotes the following verses from the Padma Purana in this connection:

*ahankrtir ma-karah syan na-karas tan nisedhakah  
tasmāt tu namasa ksetri- svatantryam pratisidhyate  
bhagavat-paratanthro 'sau tadayatātma-jivanah  
tasmāt sva-samarthyā-vidhim tyajet sarvam asesatah  
isvarasya tu samarthyat nalabhyam tasya vidyate  
tasmin nyasta-bharah sete tat-karmaiva samacaret*

"The holy names of the Lord are directly the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When the word namah is added to the names of the Lord it indicates subordination to the Lord, and the combination is called a mantra. The syllable ma refers to the material ego, and the syllable na

indicates its negation. Therefore the word namah is used to indicate one's

rejection of the false ego under the subordination of the Lord. The living entity who possesses the "field" of the material body and is thus "the proprietor of the field" is called the jiva. When the living entity uses the word namah, his independence in the form of absorption in matter is counteracted.

"A Vaisnava devotee of the Lord is completely subordinate to the Lord, meaning that his life is fully dedicated to the Lord. Therefore a Vaisnava must completely give up his independent endeavors and concocted formalities.

"By the unlimited potency of the Lord, there is nothing unachievable for His devotees. Devotees should be fully dependent on the Lord and properly engaged in His service."

The sastras that enjoin one should take initiation from a qualified transcendentalist who has perfected his life by chanting mantras. There is no possibility of receiving transcendental knowledge from an unqualified

person who is bound by the false ego of high birth and greed for money.

Therefore those who desire their own welfare should give up the materialistic, proud, so-called guru and take proper initiation from a Vaisnava guru. If one has a prominent false ego and a material conception

of life, then he will naturally become envious of the transcendental

Vaisnavas. One should give up the so-called guru who is envious of the

Vaisnavas, knowing him to be a nondevotee. If one fails to do so, one will

incure sin and deviate from the path of devotion. Sri Jiva Gosvami Prabhu

has instructed the devotees of the Lord how to nourish their practice of devotional service in the following way:

*vaisnava-vidvesi cet parityajya eva, "guror apy avaliptasye"ti smaranat. tasya*

*vaisnava-bhava-rahityenavaisnavataya "avaisnavopadistena" iti*

*vacana-visayatvac ca. yathokta-laksanasya sri-guror avidyamanatayam tu*

*tasyaiva maha-bhagavatasyaikasya nitya-sevanam paramam sreyaḥ.*

"If a so-called guru is envious of the Vaisnavas, then one should reject him, remembering the guror apy avaliptasya verse. In the Mahabharata



(Udyoga-parva 179.25) it is stated:

*guror apy avaliptasya karyakaryam ajanatah*  
*utpatha-pratipannasya parityago vidhiyate*

"A so-called guru addicted to sensual pleasure and polluted by vice, who is

ignorant and has no power to discriminate between right and wrong, and who

follows processes other than pure devotional service must be abandoned.">.

This so-called guru does not have the qualities of a Vaisnava, therefore such a nondevotee should not be accepted as a guru. Those devotees who

desire eternal welfare should say farewell to such so-called gurus,

knowing them to be the subjects of the avaisnavopadistena verse. In the H

ari-bhakti-vilasa (4.366) it is stated:

*avaisnavopadistena mantrena nirayam vrajet*  
*punas ca vidhina samyag grahayed vaisnavad guroh*

"One who gets his mantra from a guru who is a nondevotee and addicted

to

female association is doomed to a life in hell. Therefore such a person must immediately approach a genuine Vaisnava guru and again accept the

mantra from him according to the rules of scripture.". In the absence of a genuine Vaisnava guru who fits the description given above, one should

constantly serve a maha-bhagavata for one's ultimate welfare."

Those who blaspheme Vaisnavas can never become devoted to Lord Hari. Due to

their sinful activities, those who are not devotees of Krsna cannot become

Visnu-janas. The Vaisnavas should always associate with their own compatriots and should pass their time hearing and chanting topics of the Lord and His devotees. Otherwise, as a result of bad association, they will forget their constitutional position as Hari-janas and become greatly proud of being rich, learned, brahminical, and so on.

In His instructions to Sri Sanatana, Sriman Mahaprabhu has personally mentioned two main reasons why a Vaisnava may lose his standing as a Vaisnava. If a practitioner indulges in either of them, he can no longer

remain a Hari-jana. When one ceases to perform fruitive activities, mundane pride leaves him aside. Just as a brahmana who does not behave properly and lacks the appropriate brahminical qualities becomes a sudra or outcaste, so a Hari-jana whose devotional service to Lord Krsna becomes interrupted and who comes under the influence of women due to material absorption falls from the position of a Vaisnava and then considers that following the varnasrama principles is of utmost importance.

In the Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta, Madhya-lila, Chapter Twenty-two, it is stated:

*asat-sanga-tyaga,-ei vaisnava-acara  
`stri-sangi'-eka asadhu, `krsnabhakta' ara  
eta saba chadi' ara varnasrama-dharma  
akincana hana laya krsnaika-sarana  
vidhi-dharma chadi' bhaje krsnera carana  
nisiddha papacare tara kabhu nahe mana  
ajnane va haya yadi `papa' upasthita  
krsna tanre suddha kare, na karaya prayascitta*

*jnana-vairagyadi-bhaktira kabhu nahe `anga'*

*ahimsa-yama-niyamadi bule krsna-bhakta-sanga*

"A Vaisnava should always avoid the association of ordinary people.  
Common

people are very much materially attached, especially to women.  
Vaisnavas

should also avoid the company of those who are not devotees of Lord Krsna.

"Without hesitation, one should take the exclusive shelter of Lord Krsna with full confidence, giving up bad association and even neglecting the regulative principles of the four varnas and four asramas. That is to say, one should abandon all material attachment.

"Although the pure devotee does not follow all the regulative principles of varnasrama, he worships the lotus feet of Krsna. Therefore he naturally has no tendency to commit sin.

"If, however, a devotee accidentally becomes involved in a sinful activity, Krsna purifies him. He does not have to undergo the regulative form of atonement.

"The path of speculative knowledge and renunciation is not very essential for devotional service. Indeed, good qualities such as nonviolence and mind and sense control automatically accompany a devotee of Lord Krsna."

The first obstacle for being able to identify oneself as a Vaisnava is stri-sanga, association with women. Association with women is of two types, the first of which is regulated association based on varnasrama principles. In the Sri Caitanya-caritamrta, Adi-lila, Chapter One, it is said:

*krsna-bhaktira badhaka-yata subhasubha karma  
seha eka jivera ajnana-tamo-dharma*

"All kinds of activities, both auspicious and inauspicious, that are detrimental to the discharge of transcendental loving service to Lord Sri Krsna are actions of the darkness of ignorance."

Srila Thakura Narottama has also said:

*punya se sukhera dhama, tahara na laio nama papa punya dui parihara*

"Don't even talk about pious activities, which are the source of all happiness. Give up both pious and sinful activities."

Giving up the association of Hari-janas and becoming overly attached to the

wife under one's protection is the symptom of bad association. But

remaining in the grhastha asrama in order to increase Krsna's family

cannot be called stri-sanga. The second kind of stri-sanga is unregulated

association with women, which is irreligious and which creates

disturbances in the varnasrama society, because those who indulge in such

association are engaged in sinful activities, abominable activities, or

inactivity, and as a result they go to hell. The sinful people of the

material world are completely unqualified to be called Vaisnavas. And

pious people who strictly follow the rules and regulations of varnasrama

but are indifferent to the service of Hari are also completely unqualified

to be called Hari-janas.

If the lowest classes of Prakrti-janas are addressed as Hari-janas, then

those who address them as such are ineligible to have the fortune of being called Hari-janas.

If varnasrama and other fruitive activities enjoined in the sastras become prominent in one's life, then one cannot become akincana, or fully dependent on the Lord; rather these activities provoke offenses against the chanting of the holy names in the form of conceptions of "I" and "mine." If a person who is fully surrendered to Krsna becomes proud of following varnasrama principles, then it must be considered that he has become most unfortunate. Due to the influence of association with women, the whole material world is daily advancing in aversion to Hari. No one is able to understand the position of the Vaisnavas.

Moreover, even if one gets freedom from material existence by giving up the regulated and unregulated association of women, he is still not delivered. He may still be bound by the nondevotional behavior of dharma, artha, and kama, which are simply three other forms of stri-sanga. Moksa,

though not a form of stri-sanga, is nevertheless a relative accomplishment, being simply the absence of material conceptions.

Therefore the constant favorable cultivation of Krsna consciousness has been established as the principle item amongst the Vaisnava codes of behavior for removing the illusions of the nondevotees. Those who desire liberation are also nondevotees. Such persons reject varnasrama principles, engage in self-worship, and falsely claim to be paramahamsas;

therefore they cannot be Vaisnavas. If one realizes the transcendental position of the Hari-janas and serves them, then he can also become a Hari-jana. If one wants to ascertain the process for achieving devotional service through material knowledge, his endeavor will simply be another form of karma. If one wants to ascertain the process for achieving devotional service through impersonal speculation, his endeavor will be dominated by the process of jnana. And if one simply wants to immediately

enjoy sense gratification without considering its good and bad effects, his endeavor will simply be another form of sense gratification. There is no possibility for these three types of persons to achieve devotional service, which is the eternal spiritual propensity of the Hari-janas. The term "nondevotees" refers to these three types of persons; Jarasandha,



Kamsa, Sisupala, and others are also among the nondevotee aspirants of

liberation averse to Krsna.

The enlightenment of the path of jnana is considered most powerful by the

karmis who are attached to religiousity, economic development, and sense

gratification. But since it is an obstacle to the cooling moonshine of devotional service, it is not regarded highly by the unalloyed devotees who have already achieved knowledge and supreme auspiciousness. When the

nondevotees who are averse to devotional service see the prohibited sinful

activities of the pseudo-devotees, they become eager to treat them with their

own medicine. But real devotees, or Hari-janas, are not affected by such diseases. If a nonduplicious aspiring Hari-jana is in any way infected by the influence of either of these three categories, then Lord Krsna Himself protects him.

The Srimad Bhagavatam (11.20.27-30) states as follows:

*jata-sraddho mat-kathasu    nirvinnah sarva-karmasu  
veda duhkhatmakan kaman    parityage 'py anisvarah  
tato bhajeta mam pritah    sraddhalur drdha-niscayah  
jusamanas ca tan kaman    duhkhodarkams ca garhayan  
proktena bhakti-yogena    bhajato masakrn muneh  
kama hrdayya nasyanti    sarve mayi hrdis sthite  
bhidyate hrdaya-granthis    chidyante sarva-samsayah  
ksiyante casya karmani    mayi drste 'khillatmani*

[The Supreme Lord said:] "One who develops faith in My names, qualities,

and pastimes, who has given up attachment for worldly and Vedic activities

and their fruits, who has understood material sense gratification as the source of misery yet is unable to give it up-such a faithful devotee has firm conviction that all his necessities will be attained simply by the execution of devotional service, so he goes on enjoying the sense gratification that he knows will lead to misery, while condemning this sense enjoyment and worshiping Me with pure love. In this way an introspective person constantly engages in My devotional service as I have

described it, and I take residence in his heart and personally vanquish

the contamination of lust. If one installs Me in his heart, faults can no longer remain there; the knots in his heart are untied, his doubts are removed, and his desires for fruitive activities are eradicated."

The conditioned souls who are attached to and maddened by material sense

enjoyment proudly consider themselves the doers and thus become bound in

the manifold network of karma. When such people come to understand that

the results of their karma are insignificant, then only do they begin to give up their attempt to lord it over material nature and develop faith in the topics of the Supreme Lord. When one develops faith in the topics of Lord Hari, he can give up self-identification as the doer and his desire to lord it over. He then understands that all forms of material sense gratification are simply impediments on the path towards his goal of life. Yet even after understanding this, he is unable to give up his long-standing inclination for sense gratification due to bad habits and weak faith.

If one who is situated in such an unfortunate state desires to increase his faith in the topics of Hari and serve Him with strong attachment, then the

firm conviction that 'If I consider myself the doer, I will simply meet with miseries in this world' will to a great extent protect one from material attachment.

When one takes shelter at the lotus feet of a spiritual master and engages

in the exclusive service of the Lord, following in the footsteps of the mahajanas, then the transcendental Absolute Truth will capture his heart and all desires other than to serve Krsna will be vanquished. At that time the contamination produced from lust that has accumulated from many lifetimes, will be evacuated. He then no longer has any doubt; in other words, he understands that the path of devotional service is sublime. At that time he also understands the uselessness of considering himself the doer. When his self-identification as the doer with the aim of sense gratification becomes diminished, at that time he displays symptoms of full surrender such as all his activities are dedicated to satisfying the Supreme Lord, all his endeavors are directed towards pleasing Krsna, and he considers "Krsna is my only protector."

Cherished by the paramahamsas, the Srimad Bhagavatam (10.2.33) states:

*tatha na te madhava tavakah kvacid  
bhrasyanti margat tvayi baddha-sauhrdah  
tvayabhigupta vicaranti nirbhaya  
vinayakanikapa-murdhasu prabho*

"Lord Brahma said: O Madhava, Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord of the

goddess of fortune, Hari-janas completely in love with You do not fall like the seekers of other goals-the karmis and the relatively superior jnanis-fall from their respective unsteady paths. O my Lord, the Hari-janas are always protected by You and thus fearlessly traverse over the head of the commander-in-chief of those who create obstacles."

The devotees of the Lord do not remain in a dangerous situation; rather, they continue to serve Hari with transcendental realization. But if they happen to lack transcendental realization, the Lord gives them knowledge

so that they can understand themselves as Hari-janas. Needless to say, unregulated sense enjoyers, karmis, and jnanis are all desirous of physical and non-physical enjoyment, so there is no possibility of their

achieving auspiciousness. But if they give up their respective material desires, they can become devoted Hari-janas.

In the Srimad Bhagavatam (5.18.12) it is stated:

*yasyasti bhaktir bhagavaty akincana  
sarvair gunais tatra samasate surah  
harav abhaktasya kuto mahad-guna  
manorathenasati dhavato bahih*

There is no need for a devotee to separately endeavor for acquiring artificial saintly qualities, like those with concepts other than devotional service who are haunted by the ghosts of karma and jnana. If one is on the platform of devotional service, then all saintly qualities automatically manifest in him. Sri Prahlada Maharaja said, "Those who have

unmotivated devotion for the Personality of Godhead always possess all good qualities. They are perfectly established in these good qualities.

Such exalted qualities, however, can never remain in anyone who is not a Hari-jana. Because the unregulated sense enjoyers, karmis, and jnanis desire something other than the Supreme Lord and thus their minds are

attracted to changeable products of illusion and external objects of sense gratification, their absorption in various changing, ephemeral objects is only momentary. Thus the great qualities of saintly persons cannot find a place in their hearts permanently or for any duration of time." Today we may see some good qualities in something and consider it excellent, but over the course of time that excellence does not remain constant, being differently seen in the eyes of different viewers from different points of view at different times. Hari-janas, however, are eternal and their activities are eternal. All the perceived and perceiving beings of Vaikuntha, moreover, are adorned with the transcendental qualities of being eternal, faultless, unlimited, and absolutely desirable.

Pure unalloyed Vaisnavas are actually very rare. Those who can say, "Such

ideal Vaisnava character is most desirable," are also seldom found in this world. Therefore the only means of achieving the highest goal of life is to simply hear and chant the topics of Hari and the Hari-janas. If for even a moment anyone, whether qualified or unqualified, down to the lowest

sinner, factually recognizes that the saintly Hari-janas are the topmost entities in the fourteen worlds and beyond and that they are therefore

most respectable, then their respective spiritual practices will certainly increase our festive joy. The number of such qualified devotees is such a small fraction of the world's population! Therefore it is most important that the supreme ideal position of the Hari-janas should be somewhat realized in the heart of every living entity.

The wicked tendency of dedicated Prakṛti-janas is to completely reject the worship of Hari. It is stated in the Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta (Madhya-līla, Chapter 19) as follows:

*tara madhye `sthavara', jangama'-dui bheda  
jangame tiryak-jala-sthalacara-vibheda  
tara madhye manusya-jati ati alpatara  
tara madhye mleccha, pulinda, baudha, sabara  
veda-nistha-madhye ardheka veda `mukhe' mane  
veda-nisiddha papa kare, dharma nahi gane  
dharmacari-madhye bahuta `karma-nistha'  
koti-karma-nistha-madhye eka jnani' srestha  
koti-jnani-madhye haya eka-jana `mukta'  
koti-mukta-madhye `durlabha' eka kṛṣṇa-bhakta*



*krsna-bhakta-niskama, ataeva `santa'*

*bhukti-mukti-siddhi-kami-sakali `asanta'*

"The unlimited living entities can be divided into two divisions-those that can move and those that cannot move. Among living entities that can move,

there are birds, aquatics and animals.

"Although the living entities known as human beings are very small in quantity, that division may be still further subdivided, for there are many uncultured human beings like mlecchas, pulindas, bauddhas and sabaras.

"Among human beings, those who are followers of the Vedic principles are

considered civilized. Among these, almost half simply give lip service while committing all kinds of sinful activities against these principles.

Such people do not care for the regulative principles.

"Among the followers of Vedic knowledge, most are following the process of

fruitive activity and distinguishing between good and bad work. Out of

many such sincere fruitive actors, there may be one who is actually wise.

"Out of many millions of such wise men, one may actually become liberated

[mukta], and out of many millions of such liberated persons, a pure devotee of Lord Krsna is very difficult to find.

"Because a devotee of Lord Krsna is desireless, he is peaceful. Fruitive workers desire material enjoyment, jnanis desire liberation, and yogis desire material opulence; therefore they are all lusty and cannot be peaceful."

We find it written that there are only twelve Hari-janas in the four yugas-Satya, Treta, Dvapara, and Kali. Does this mean that the Hari-janas have given up Vaisnavism to serve the materialistic Prakrti-janas? Is this the conclusion of the sastras? Every living entity is constitutionally a servant of Krsna, or a Hari-jana. The living entity is bound by the ropes of maya in proportion to his forgetfulness of his identity as the servant of Krsna. He then identifies himself as a smarta. Mundane foolishness is greatly diminished for one who realizes that an unalloyed Hari-jana is

worshipable throughout the three worlds and is nondifferent from Hari, as His servant.

By His sweet will, the Supreme Lord often sends His associates into this material world in order to treat the conditioned souls. This is also one of the Lord's tests. In order to spread His glories, to show how exclusively devoted to His service certain Hari-janas are, and to bring other Hari-janas back to His abode, the supreme enjoyer of transcendental

pastimes sends His own associate or associates into this material world as

His "devotee-incarnations." The actual facts are distorted if such personalities are counted among those who have become perfect by regulated

practice. Those Hari-janas who appear within this world as bhakta-avatars

before, during, or after the appearance of the Lord are not in the category of sadhana-siddha devotees. And those Hari-janas who are followers of the twelve perfect devotees are counted among the sadhana-siddha devotees.

While studying the history of the Sri-sampradaya, we came to know that

twelve perfect associates of the Lord appear at different times in this world from Vaikuntha in order to benefit the living entities. Also from authoritative Gaudiya texts such as Sri Gaura-ganoddheda-dipika we can learn of the identities the Lord and His associates of Goloka and Vaikuntha assume in gaura-lila. When a living entity achieves perfection by worshiping Hari and realizes his perfect and uncontaminated status as a servant of Krsna, he then discovers his own eternal identity and the Lord becomes constantly manifest to him. Persons who are averse to the Hari-janas, however, can never understand this fact.

The activities and symptoms of Vaisnavas are completely beyond the understanding of persons with material intelligence. During the four yugas, innumerable Hari-janas have honestly worshiped the Supreme Lord,

showing a perfect example in their lives. By the hostile counteractive measures of the smartas, they were neither broken-hearted, discouraged,

nor induced to give up their position as Hari-janas. Those who are unfortunate and less intelligent become bound by the results of pious and impious activities and create enmity with the Hari-janas.

The Vaisnava-manjusa quotes the following from the Prapannamrta,  
Chapter

Seventy-four:

*kasara-bhuta-mahad-ahvaya-bhaktisarah*

*srimac-chathari-kulasekhara-visnucittah*

*bhaktanghri-renu-munivaha-catus-kavindrah*

*te divya-suraya iti prathita dasorvyam*

*goda yatindra-misrabhyam dvadasaitan vidur budhah*

*visrjya godam madhura- kavina saha sattama*

*kecid dvadasa-sankhyatan vadanti vibudhottamah*

The history of these associates of the Lord in the Sri-sampradaya are described in Sanskrit language in the two books Divya-suri-carita and Prapannamrta; in the Manipravala language, which is a mixture of Sanskrit

and Tamil, in the books Guru-paramaparai-prabhava, Prabandha-sara, and

Upadesa-ratna-malai; and in the Dravidian Tamil language in the book Pada-nadai-vilakkam.

(1) Kasara Muni, or Sara Yogi (Payaga-i Alvar), (2) Bhuta Yogi (Pudatta

Alvar), who was an incarnation of the Lord's conch, (3) Bhranta Yogi, or Mahad (Pe Alvar), (4) Bhaktisara (Tirumadisaippiran Alvar), (5) Sathari, also known as Sathakopa, Parankusa, and Bakulabharana (Namma Alvar), (6)

Kulasekhara (Kulasekhara Alvar), who was an incarnation of the Kaustubha

gem, (7) Visnucitta (Peri-i Alvar), who was an incarnation of Garuda, (8)

Bhaktanhgrirenu (Tondaradippadi Alvar), (9) Munivaha, also known as Yogiva

ha and Prananatha (Tiruppani Alvar), who was an incarnation of Srivatsa,

(10) Catukavi, or Parakal (Tirumanga-i Alvar), who was an incarnation of the Lord's bow, (11) Goda (Andal), who was an incarnation of Nila Laksmi,

(12) Ramanuja (Yambarumanar, Uda-iyavar, Ilai Alvar), who was an incarnation of Lakshmana, and (13) Madhura Kavi (Madhura Kavigal Alvar).

It is not that only South Indian devotees have come from Vaikuntha; if we look at the pastimes of the pure devotees of Bengal, we will realize that they are also eternal Hari-janas. We will now quote a few examples from the Gaura-ganoddesa, Ramanuja-carita, and Madhva-carita.

Those who have attained perfection in their bhajana have realized their

own

constitutional position. But nowadays in the Gaudiya Vaisnava-sampradaya

some immature pancaratrika-mantra traders are presenting imaginary material names and forms as the goal of life and the path of perfection (siddha-pranali); in this way they gratify the minds of their disciples as well as disclose their own foolishness and ignorance of the Vaisnava literatures. We are not talking about these persons. The realizations of those who came to know their constitutional position by the strength of their authentic worship of Hari (hari-bhajana) were often written down by their disciples in various parts of India at various times.

We do not wish speak further on this subject. Yet it is also true that universally honored persons like Sri Madhvacarya, the incarnation of Vayu,

Bhima, or Hanuman; Sri Ramanuja, the incarnation of Sankarsana; and Gaudiya Vaisnavas like Prabhuvara Sri Rupa Gosvami, Prabhuvara Sri Sanatana Gosvami, Prabhuvara Sri Raghunatha Gosvami, Prabhu Sri Narottama

Thakura, Sri Syamananda Prabhu, Prabhu Sri Narahari Sarakara Thakura,

Isvari Sri Srimati Jahnava Devi, and others, as well as Sripada Visvanatha

Cakravarti Prabhu, Sripada Baladeva Vidyabhusana Prabhu, various sripada-siddha-babaji Prabhus, Prabhuvara Sri Srimad Bhaktivinoda Thakura, and Sripada Paramahansa Sri Sri Visnupada Sri Sri Gaurakisora dasa Prabhuvara never performed devotional service with the mentality of mortal living beings fallen in the pit of smarta attitudes. These personalities had all realized their individual spiritual identities and, being fixed in pure devotional service, they revealed the transcendental nature of their bhajana.

Mortal beings who do not understand the bhagavata or pancaratrika paths, who are imperfect, expert in the false egoism of material birth and so on, and desirous of taking the post of acarya for the sake of money can never become Hari-janas. They are all nondevotees. Their acting as family gurus is just like the mundane activities of weavers, potters, blacksmiths, cobblers, shopkeepers, reciters, singers, and drummers. But this is completely different from the transcendental faith of the Vaisnavas. Since we are shoe carriers for the Hari-janas, we also agree with this description.



The Hari-janas are divided into five types according to their taking shelter of each of the five primary rasas-santa, dasya, sakhya, vatsalya, and madhurya. There is a further division into two categories: If one takes shelter of regulative devotional service, which is predominated by appreciation of the Lord's opulences on the strength of the injunctions of scriptures and the spiritual master, that is called vaidha-marga; and if one follows according to his own taste a particular resident of Vraja and accepts devotional service as his constitutional engagement, it is called raga-marga. This is explained in the Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta, Madhya-līla, Chapter Twenty-four, as follows:

*`vidhi-bhakta', `raga-bhakta',-dui-vidha nama  
dui-vidha bhakta haya cari cari prakara  
parisada, sadhana-siddha, sadhaka-gana ara  
jata-ajata-rati-bhede sadhaka dui bheda  
vidhi-raga-marge cari cari-asta bheda  
vidhi-bhaktye nitya-siddha parisada-`dasa'  
`sakha' `guru' `kanta-gana',-cari-vidha prakasa  
sadhana-siddha-dasa, sakha, guru, kanta-gana*

*jata-rati sadhaka-bhakta-cari-vidha jana*

*ajata-rati sadhaka-bhakta,-e cari prakara*

*vidhi-marge bhakte sodasa bheda pracara*

*raga-marge aiche bhakte sodasa vibheda*

*dui marge atmaramera batrisa vibheda*

"There are two types of atmaramas-one is engaged in regulative devotional

service and the other is engaged in spontaneous devotional service.

"The atmaramas engaged in regulative and spontaneous devotional service are

further categorized into four groups. There are the eternal associates, the associates who have become perfect by devotional service, and those

who are engaged in devotional service and are called sadhaka.

"Those who are practicing devotional service are either mature or immature.

Therefore the sadhakas are of two types. Since the devotees execute either

regulative devotional service or spontaneous devotional service and there

are four groups within these two divisions, altogether there are eight varieties.

"By executing regulative devotional service, one is elevated to the platform of an eternally perfect associate-such as a servant, friend, superior or beloved woman. These are of four varieties.

"Among those who have perfected themselves by devotional service, there are

servants, friends, superiors and beloved damsels. Similarly, there are four types of mature devotees.

"Within the category of regulative devotional service, there are also immature devotees. These are also of four varieties. Thus in regulative devotional service there are altogether sixteen varieties.

"On the path of spontaneous devotional service, there are also sixteen categories of devotees. Thus there are thirty-two types of atmaramas enjoying the Supreme Lord on these two paths."

The supremely pure devotional service given to the Gaudiya Vaisnavas

by

Sriman Mahaprabhu is incomparable. This devotional service is not offered

to any person within the fourteen worlds. The devotees have no object of service even in the waters of the Viraja, which is situated beyond the material universe and which cleanses one of the three modes of nature.

This Viraja is the highest destination for those on the path of karma.

Brahmaloka is situated on the other side of the Viraja. In the nondifferentiated Brahmaloka there is no recipient for one's devotional service. This is the highest destination attained through impersonal

knowledge. Passing beyond Brahmaloka, one comes to the abode of Sri Vaikuntha, where Lord Narayana resides. The regulated worshipers on the

path of pancaratika serve their worshipable Lord Narayana here under the

shelter of two and half rasas-santa, dasya, and sakhya with awe and reverence. Above Vaikuntha is Goloka Vrndavana, where Sri Krsnacandra, who

is the perfect object for all five rasas, is eternally worshiped by His devotees, who are the repositories of love. Devotional service is meant for Him alone. Since the Hari-janas' worshipable Lord is not present within the fourteen worlds as any material object, within the waters of

the Viraja as the neutral balance of the material modes, or within

Brahmaloka in formless Brahman, they have nothing do with these places.

The worshipable Lord of the pancaratika Vaisnavas resides in Vaikuntha, and the worshipable Lord of the bhagavata Vaisnavas resides in Goloka. One

should worship one of these Lords.

In the Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta (Madhya 19.151-154) Śrīman Mahāprabhu speaks

as follows:

*brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavan jiva*

*guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde paya bhakti-lata-bija*

*mali hana kare sei bija aropana*

*śravaṇa-kīrtana-jale karaye secana*

*upajīya bade lata `brahmāṇḍa' bhedi' yaya*

*`viraja' `brahma-loka' bhedi' `para-vyoma' paya*

*tabe yaya tad-upari `goloka-vṛndavana'*

*`kṛṣṇa-carana'-kalpa-vṛkṣe kare arohana*

"The living entity is wandering up and down, from one planet to another,

and he is very fortunate if by the mercy of the spiritual master and Krsna Himself he can get the seed of devotional service to Krsna.

"When a person receives the seed of devotional service, he should take care

of it by becoming a gardener and sowing the seed in his heart. If he waters the seed gradually by the process of sravana and kirtana [hearing and chanting], the seed will begin to sprout.

"As one waters the bhakti-lata-bija, the seed sprouts, and the creeper gradually increases to the point where it penetrates the walls of this universe and goes beyond the Viraja River between the spiritual world and

the material world. It attains Brahmaloka, the Brahman effulgence, and, penetrating through that stratum, it reaches the spiritual sky and the spiritual planet Goloka Vrndavana.

"Being situated in one's heart and being watered by sravana-kirtana, the bhakti creeper grows more and more. In this way it attains the shelter of the desire tree of the lotus feet of Krsna, who is eternally situated in the planet known as Goloka Vrndavana in the topmost region of the

spiritual sky."

Nothing material, no matter how glorious, can be compared with these superexcellent devotees of the Lord. As one cannot compare a mustard seed

with Mount Meru, a drop of water with the ocean, or a dwarf with the high sky, it is similarly improper to compare the prestige of the Hari-janas with any ordinary mundane prestige. We will now cite some examples from

the scriptures and some narrations of the mahajanas regarding the pathetic

results achieved by materially conditioned entities who endeavor to directly or indirectly criticize, envy, or disrespect such Hari-janas with either their speech, bodies, or minds.

The Skanda Purana states:

*yo hi bhagavatam lokam upahasam nrpottama*

*karoti tasya nasyanti artha-dharma-yasah-sutah*

*nindam kurvanti ye mudha vaisnavanam mahatmanam*

*patanti pitrbhih sardham maha-raurava-samjnite*

*hanti nindati vai dvesti vaisnavan nabhinandati*

*krudhyate yati no harsam darsane patanani sat*

"O best of kings, if one derides an exalted devotee, he loses the results of his pious activities, his opulence, his reputation, and his sons. Those fools who blaspheme great Vaisnavas fall down to the hell known as Maharaurava, accompanied by their forefathers. Whoever kills or blasphemes

a Vaisnava, whoever is envious of or angry with a Vaisnava, and whoever does not offer proper greetings or feel joy upon seeing a Vaisnava certainly becomes fallen."

In the Amṛta-saroddhara it is stated:

*janma-prabhṛti yat kincit sukṛtam samuparjitam  
nasam ayati tat sarvam pīdayed yadi vaiṣṇavan*

"If one gives pain to the Vaisnavas, then the results of his pious activities like high birth and high caste are all destroyed."

In the Dvāraka-mahatmya it is said:



*kara-patrais ca phalyante su-tivrair yama-sasanaih*  
*nindam kurvanti ye papa vaisnavanam mahatmanam*  
*pujito bhagavan visnur janmantara-satair api*  
*prasidati na visvatma vaisnave capamanite*

"Those most sinful people who criticize great Vaisnavas are subjected by Yamaraja to the severe punishment of being sliced in pieces by very sharp  
saws. Lord Hari, the Supersoul of the entire universe, is never pleased with the miscreant who insults a Vaisnava, even if he has worshiped Visnu  
for hundreds of births."

Also in the Skanda Purana it is said:

*purvam krtva tu sammanam avajnam kurute tu yah*  
*vaisnavanam mahi-pala sanvayo yati sanksayam*

"O ruler of the world, one who first respects a Vaisnava and then later insults him is vanquished along with his family."

In the Brahma-vaivarta Purana, Krsna-janma-khanda, it is stated:

*ye nindanti hrsikesam tad-bhaktam punya-rupinam  
sata-janmarjitam punyam tesam nasyati niscitam  
te pacyante maha-ghore kumbhipake bhayanake  
bhaksitah kita-sanghena yavac candra-divakarau  
tasya darsana-matrena punyam nasyati niscitam  
gangam snatva ravim drsta tada vidvan visuddhyati*

"Those who criticize Lord Hrsikesa or the Vaisnavas, who are under His all-auspicious shelter, lose all the pious credits they have accrued in a hundred births. Such sinners rot in the Kumbhipaka hell and are eaten by hordes of worms for as long as the sun and moon exist. If one sees a person who blasphemes Lord Visnu and His devotees, then the results of all

his pious activities are lost. When learned persons see such non-Vaisnavas, they purify themselves by taking bath in the Ganges and looking at the sun."

Sri Ramanujacarya has stated:

*srimad bhagavatacanam bhagavatah puja-vidher uttamam  
sri-visnor avamananad guru-taram sri-vaisnavollanghanam  
tirthad acyuta-padajad guru-taram tirtham tadiyanghri-jam  
pujanad visnu-bhaktanam purusartho 'sti netarah  
tesu tad-dvesatah kincit nasti nasanam atmanah  
sri-vaisnavair maha-bhagaih sallapam karayet sada  
tadiya-dusaka-janan na pasyet purusadhaman  
sri-vaisnavanam cihnani dhrtvapi visayaturaih  
taih sardham vancaka-janaih saha-vasam na karayet*

"The worship of Vaisnavas is greater than the worship of the Supreme Lord.

Insulting a Vaisnava is more offensive than insulting Lord Visnu. The water that has washed the feet of a devotee is more pure than the water that has washed the feet of Krsna. There is no higher achievement than to

worship a Vaisnava. There is nothing more offensive than being envious of

a Vaisnava, which results in one's utter ruination. One should always converse with maha-bhagavata Vaisnavas, and one should never see the lowest of mankind who criticizes Vaisnavas. One should never reside with a

duplicitous person who is attached to sense gratification and decorated with the signs of a Vaisnava."

It is described in the Sri Caitanya-bhagavata (Madhya 5.145 and 10.102):

*yata papa haya praja janere himsile  
tara sata-guna haya vaisnave nindile*

"The sin committed by being envious of other living entities is multiplied a hundredfold if one criticizes a Vaisnava.

*ye papistha vaisnavera jati-buddhi kare  
janma janma adhama-yonite dubi' mare*

"The sinful person who considers a Vaisnava as belonging to a particular caste repeatedly takes birth in abominable species life after life."

In the Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta, Ādi-līla, Chapter Seventeen, and Antya-līla, Chapter Three, it is stated:

*bhavani-pujara saba samagri lana*

*ratre srivasera dvare sthana lepana*

"He placed all the paraphernalia for worshipping the goddess Durga outside

Srivasa Thakura's door.

*madya-bhanda-pase dhari' nija-ghare gela*

"Then he placed a pot of wine beside all this.

*tabe saba sista-loka kare hahakara*

*aiche karma hetha kaila kon duracara*

*hadike aniya saba dura karaila*

"Then all the assembled gentlemen exclaimed, `What is this? What is this?

Who has performed such mischievous activities? Who is that sinful man?'

They called for a sweeper [hadi], who threw all the items of worship far away.

*tina dina rahi' sei gopala-capala*

*sarvange ha-ila kustha, vahe rakta-dhara*

*sarvanga bedila kite, kate nirantara*

"After three days, leprosy attacked Gopala Capala, and blood oozed from sores all over his body. He was incessantly covered with germs and insects

bit him all over his body.

*are papi, bhakta-dvesi, tore na uddharimu*

*koti-janma ei mate kidaya khaoyaimu*

"O sinful person, envious of pure devotees, I shall not deliver you!

Rather, I shall have you bitten by these germs for many millions of years.

*koti janma habe tora raurave patana*

*"ghata-patiya murkha tuni bhakti kanha jana?*

*haridasa-thakure tuni kaili apamana!*

*sarva-nasa habe tora, na habe kalyana"*

"You will have to fall down into hellish life for ten million births. You

are a foolish logician, what do you know about the devotional service of the Lord? You have insulted Haridasa Thakura. Thus there will be a dangerous position for you. You should not expect anything auspicious.

*krsna-svabhava,-bhakta-ninda sahite na pare*

"The characteristic of Krsna is that He cannot tolerate blasphemy of His devotees."

Sri Jiva Gosvami has written in his Bhakti-sandarbha:

*vaisnava-ninda sravane 'pi dosa uktah-  
nindam bhagavatah srnvams tat-parasya janasya va  
tato napaiti yah so 'pi yaty adhah sukrtac cyutah  
tato 'pagamas casamarthasya eva. samarthena tu  
nindaka-jihva chettavya. tatrapi asmarthena sva-prana-parityago 'pi  
kartavyah. yathoktam devya-  
karnau pidhaya nirayad yad akalpa ise  
dharmavitary asrnibhir nrbhir asyamane  
chindyat prasahya rusatim asatam prabhus cej*

*jihvam asun api tato visrjet sa dharmah*

"Not only those who criticize Vaisnavas are faulty, but those who hear criticism of Vaisnavas are also offenders. This is described in scriptures such as the Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.74.40): `Anyone who fails to immediately

leave the place where he hears criticism of the Supreme Lord or His faithful devotee will certainly fall down, bereft of his pious credit.'

"The injunction to leave the place is meant only for those who are unable to take any other steps. If one is able, he should cut out the tongue of he who is blaspheming the Vaisnava. And if one is unable to do this, he should give up his life.

"In the Srimad Bhagavatam (4.4.17) Sati, the daughter of Daksa, spoke like

this: `If one hears an irresponsible person blaspheme the master and controller of religion or the Vaisnavas, one should block his ears and go away if unable to punish him. But if one is able, then one should cut out the tongue of that miscreant, who is speaking such filthy language, and if unable to do this one should give up his own life-this is the religious



principle."

## **Vyavahara-kanda**

## Section Concerning Behavior

The readers have already been introduced to material and spiritual personalities in the previous two chapters. In this chapter we will discuss the comparison in the behavior of these two.

According to mundane consideration, one has to be qualified for any activity that he engages in. Otherwise, if an activity is performed by an unqualified person, there will be so many obstacles. Intelligent persons at different times have introduced various processes in order to benefit the people in general. Among these processes, some are beneficial for the present life and some are beneficial for the next life. Any simple-minded person can easily understand what is beneficial for the present life, yet being unable to experience subjects of the next life they introduce complex fallacious arguments. According to the variety of people's taste, behavior, and expertise, they reach various conclusions while discussing topics regarding the next life. People with similar natures who follow such people become attached to a particular opinion and reject contrary opinions. Generally, people in the mode of goodness have different

opinions in every subject from those who are influenced by the modes of passion and ignorance. And when one is situated in pure goodness and exhibits a mood of indifference, his activities are distinct from the activities of one in goodness, which counteracts passion and ignorance. Conceptions regarding the next life in the hands of the four above-mentioned classes of thinkers assume four different forms. Thus there will certainly be differences among unregulated sense enjoyers, fruitive workers, mental speculators, and devotees. These four categories have descended through disciplic succession in various branches since time immemorial. People accept whatever they find favorable, and in this way they exhibit their individual qualifications.

If one speaks only of his own qualification without understanding other's qualifications, then there will be no benefit for the other party; rather this will create innumerable, never-ending arguments. That is why instructions according to one's qualification produce better results. We often hear about quarrels between two parties, and by taking sides we identify our position. This is called partiality. Yet as far as possible one should maintain neutrality on the strength of superior, noble education.

When realized through only the samvit aspect, the Absolute Truth appears

devoid of eternal bliss and is called Brahman; when realized through the combined samvit and sandhini aspects, the Absolute Truth still appears devoid of hladini, or spiritual bliss, and is called Paramatma; and when the sac-cid-ananda aspects are simultaneously manifest, the Absolute Truth

is called Bhagavan. Although the Absolute Truth is one, the knowers of the

Truth have realized this advaya-jnana, or nondual supreme consciousness,

in three different features. An absence of hladini, or eternal bliss, from the Absolute Truth is contradictory to advaya-jnana.

In the Srimad Bhagavatam (1.2.11) it is stated:

*vadanti tat tattva-vidas tattvam yaj jnanam advayam*

*brahmeti paramatmeti bhagavan iti sadyate*

Dualist consciousness is called maya from the aspect of knowledge, viyoga

from the aspects of existence and awareness, and abhakti (nondevotion)

from the aspects of eternity, knowledge, and bliss. Learned transcendentalists who know the science of the Absolute Truth call this nondual consciousness "the nondual reality" (advaya-tattva). They call that one entity by the three names Brahman, Paramatma, and Bhagavan. When the Mayavada philosophy is resorted to, Brahman and Paramatma are considered different from Bhagavan.

Some learned scholars are brahmanas, some are yogis, and some are bhagavatas. None of these three categories of men maintain material desires. Practically it is seen that when any of the above-mentioned transcendentalists forget their constitutional position as a result of dualistic consciousness born of material absorption and they consider themselves to some extent the doers in the field of activities due to various material desires, they then exhibit mutual differences in their tastes. They are then swallowed by the material kingdom's conceptions of superiority and inferiority. But when they realize their constitutional position, their fruitive mentality is diminished and they develop equal vision. At this point we do not wish to enter further into the complexities of the scriptures. But we can say this much: for one who has

a particular material taste, that taste appears supreme. The faith of living beings is determined by how they identify themselves. Therefore if we want to make an impartial comparison, we should not be overcome by distorted understanding like the karmis. Our impartial statements will never be in agreement with those of the karmis. Therefore, until the karmis advance to a higher platform, they will not be able to understand our impartial statements; they will wrongly consider us selfish like themselves and hold us in contempt, thus uselessly wasting their time.

We have already discussed eligibility and position. One kind of eligibility may be strange to another person, but when he also attains that eligibility it becomes palatable to him. Although there are different positions, steadiness in one's own position is called piety and the opposite is called impiety. When one is situated in a particular position, he can see the faults of others; but if the statuses are equal, then there is no opportunity for such differences. If the brahmanas, yogis, and devotees do not consider each other's qualifications, there will certainly be quarrels among them and various difficulties in ascertaining their relative positions. If one impartially and carefully determines the position and eligibility of a subject, he will be able to reconcile

everything properly; otherwise he merely becomes disturbed and accomplishes nothing.

Persons whose behavior we are presently comparing have various goals. Hence, the differences in their behavior are inevitable. Prakṛti-jana refers to an enjoyer of temporary sense gratification. The term Prakṛty-atita-jana, or one who is transcendental to material nature, is used to refer to a renunciate, while the term Hari-jana refers to the community of those who give up the propensities for enjoying and renouncing and are interested in the eternal service of Hari. Just because the Prakṛti-janas do not respect the behavior of the Prakṛty-atita-janas or the Hari-janas, that does not mean that the behavior of the Hari-janas is not respectable. Although the Hari-janas appear similar to the Prakṛti-janas while living in this world, that does not mean that their behavior will not differ. While living with the Prakṛti-janas, the Prakṛty-atita-janas approve their activities, and since they deny their own liberated position they do not feel inclined to behave differently from others while living in this world. But because the contrary moods of the Hari-janas' eternal position are more or less opposite to those of the Prakṛti-janas of this material world, there are bound to be differences

between them. Differences in transcendental realization is the cause of this discrimination.

The three features of the nondual Absolute Truth are endowed with energies.

Bhagavan is the supreme controller of all illusory and spiritual energies, Paramatma, as the indwelling Supersoul, is the Lord of most of the illusory energy and a portion of the spiritual energy, while Brahman is pure consciousness in isolation from all qualities that are known in terms of the Supreme Lord's energies. As an object is perceived differently by different senses, so the Absolute Truth, although one, appears in three forms. These three, however, should not be considered actually different. It has already been described that the possessor of the material and spiritual energies cannot be perceived simply through impersonal knowledge. Although through the combined features of the sat and cit aspects the Supreme Lord's mastery over the illusory energy and the variegatedness of Vaikuntha is found, these features do not reveal the fullness of the expanded pastimes of the energy and the energetic. The Supreme Lord fully manifests only through the combination of the sat, cit, and ananda aspects. Thus the indifferent brahmanas who know Brahman, the



yogis who realize the Supersoul, and the devotees of the Supreme Lord are

all engaged in serving the advaya-jnana Absolute Truth. The karmis, who are full of material desires, the jnanis, who have renounced material desires, and the devotees, who have developed faith in topics of Lord Hari, are all yogis. The difference between them is that some are karma-yogis, some are jnana-yogis, and others are bhakti-yogis. These three types of persons have the advaya-jnana Truth alone as their asset. The devotees of the Lord are in full knowledge of Krsna, the yogis are in full knowledge of the indwelling Supersoul, who resides in the heart of everyone and is the master of Vaikuntha, and the brahmanas are in full knowledge of impersonal Brahman, which is devoid of variegated, transcendental, blissful pastimes. On the pretext of philosophical argument, no one should say that the devotees have no knowledg of Krsna, the yogis have no knowledge of the Supersoul, and the brahmanas have no knowledge of Brahman. All three in their own capacity are actually worshipers of the advaya-jnana Truth.

If the brahmanas who know Brahman desire to practice yoga, they can do so;

and if they desire to worship Krsna, they can also do so. If the devotees of Krsna become averse to worshipping Krsna, in other words, if they fall from the path of devotional service, they can become karma-yogis or jnana-yogis; and if they fall from knowledge of Krsna or knowledge of the Supersoul, they can become brahmanas on the platform of impersonal knowledge. The yogis are situated on a platform below the devotees of the

Lord, and the brahmanas who know Brahman are situated on a platform below

the yogis. The yogis who have realized the Supersoul can advance to the position of the devotees or degrade to the position of impersonalist brahmanas. When brahmanas accept the doctrine of fruitive activities in the world of material qualities, they also become affected by material qualities. In such a condition, the brahmanas' impersonal knowledge becomes dormant. And when they are freed from material qualities by the influence of impersonal knowledge, they can also become transcendental brahmanas.

When the mode of passion is mixed with the mode of goodness, then a brahmana becomes identified as a ksatriya. When ignorance is mixed with

passion, one is known as a vaisya. And when the mode of ignorance is

prominent, then one gives up the mode of goodness, the status of a twice-born, and becomes known as a sudra. Since materialistic brahmanas

are conditioned by the material mode of goodness, they accept various varnas within the material kingdom. When they are situated in the nonmaterial kingdom free from material qualities, they become known as transcendental impersonalist brahmanas in the form of knowers of exclusive, pure consciousness. When they are in the nonmaterial kingdom

free from material qualities and endowed with knowledge of both matter and

spirit, they become known as yogis in the form of mixed jnanis. When they

are in the nonmaterial kingdom free from material qualities, those yogis who are knowers of Brahman endowed with all spiritual qualities are known

as devotees of Vrajendra-nandana, who is the personification of spiritual pastimes. Therefore all living entities are eternal servants of Krsna.

Giving up their eternal propensities, these servants of Krsna become yogis, brahmanas, members of the four materially conditioned varnas, animals, birds, insects, flies, worms, plants, and so on.

The Supreme Lord eternally enjoys pastimes in various forms as

svayam-rupa,

prakasa, tad-ekatma, svamsa, and vibhinnamsa. The vibhinnamsas are known

as "separated parts" because there is a quantitative difference between them and the others like the svamsa. But there is no difference in their spiritual qualities. Since the vibhinnamsas possess spiritual qualities in minute quantity, they are prone to come under the control of maya, the illusory energy of the fully spiritual svamsa; but they are not eternally under the control of the external material energy. The impersonal Brahman

is the incomplete manifestation of the Supreme Lord. Due to the Supreme

Lord's complete manifestation, the same unbroken Truth appears as the Paramatma, or Supersoul. When this feature of the Supreme Lord takes the

role as controller of the living entities, He is known as Paramatma.

The unlimited energies of the Supreme Lord are divided into three categories. His internal energy manifests His eternally relishable qualities in the form of His spiritual pastimes. His external energy creates superior and inferior undesirable conditions within finite time and produces the temporary nature of things. When His separated marginal

energy, the living entities, become conditioned, they become enjoyers of the external energy; but when they become liberated, they eternally engage

in the service of the Lord, who is the supreme enjoyer. When the infinitesimal living entities become inclined to serve the undivided supreme consciousness, they no longer remain controlled by the external energy. The multitotal energetic Visnu, who resides in everyone's heart as

the Supersoul, maintains entire universes through His external energy. The

Supreme Lord as the antaryami, the inner witness, resides in the topmost abode of Goloka, in the spiritual sky of Maha-Vaikuntha, in the three bodies of water [karanodaka, grbhodaka, and ksirodaka], in the vibhinnamsa

living entities, and in the kingdom of Durga. In Goloka and in the Vaikunthas He is eternally present in His original identity as svayam-rupa and svayam-prakasa. He appears in the kingdom of Durga from time to time

for particular purposes. Although the fully independent Lord is the master of maya, He descends into her kingdom. His eternal associates, the Vaisnavas, can and do come to this material world in their eternal spiritual forms. When the vibhinnamsa living entities become averse to the

service of Hari due to being subject to the control of maya, they enjoy the fruits of their activities through their enjoyment prone material minds and bodies. But when such living entities become free from the coverings of karma and jnana and devoid of material desires through the process of sadhana-bhakti, they then cultivate the favorable service of Lord Krsna. Being liberated from the bondage of maya, they are established in the kingdom of bhava and prema, or ecstasy and love, and become famous as sadhana-siddha devotees.

Due to being situated in the marginal position, living entities who are averse to Hari assume the nature of mixed consciousness; in other words, when the marginal energy living entities mix with the external energy, they consider themselves the enjoyers and then enter the material world. The cause of the spirit soul's coming to live in this world in aversion to Krsna is his misuse of his free will. When this aversion becomes strong, the living entities accept a material mind and body in order to enjoy the temporary material world and thus come under the control of fruitive reactions. And when, on the strength of pious activities, they become transcendental to the varnasrama principles, which distinguish superior

and inferior behavior in this world, they become paramahamsas by perfecting themselves through sadhana. Those who become paramahamsas are

the Hari-janas. And those who fall from the platform of paramahamsa and engage in fruitive activities while associating with matter are situated on the platform of arnasrama. Conditioned souls who are situated on the platform of varnasrama consider that the Vaisnava paramahamsas are also

situated on the platform of varnasrama. But when they see that the Hari-janas are actually different from the Prakrti-janas, they become favorably inclined towards Krsna. When conditioned souls take shelter of the Vaisnavas' lotus feet without duplicity, they give up their ideas of impersonalism and fruitive work. The living entities in this material world who are subject to punishment from Yamaraja consider the Hari-janas,

who are offered obeisances by Yamaraja, as Prakrti-janas. In order to exhibit their humility, the swanlike paramahamsa Hari-janas follow varnasrama principles and thus deceive the Prakrti-janas. Actually the Prakrti-janas and the Hari-janas are completely opposite in nature to each

other, like illusion and reality.

While remaining in the material world, the living entities display two different tastes regarding their object of worship. The first taste is for Brahman, which is impersonal, without variety, and without qualities. Because Brahman is eternally without variety, it is not a suitable object of enjoyment for the living entities who are impelled by the illusory energy. That is why those who have a taste for impersonalism imagine five

or seven demigods as worshipable, while in reality they are establishing various material things as their objects of worship. The second taste is for eternal spiritual variegatedness. The worshipable object for such living entities has an eternal name, an eternal form, eternal qualities, eternal associates, and eternal pastimes. The impersonalists, however, consider that in the liberated state there is neither variegatedness nor spiritual pastimes-this mundane, proud explanation is conceived by those who are nondevotees of Visnu. Some of these persons even deny the existence of the spiritual world and become known as atheists.

There are three main opinions found among the living entities-full rejection of the existence of the spiritual world, full acceptance of the existence of the spiritual world, and the uncertain position of both accepting and rejecting the existence of the spiritual world. Among those



who reject the existence of the spiritual world, some have concluded that the spiritual world has no existence at all, some have concluded that its existence is doubtful, and others say it is unknowable. Those who fully accept the existence of the spiritual world realize the supermundane Personality of Godhead in two different features-*aisvarya* and *madhurya*, or

opulence and sweetness. And those who both accept and reject the existence

of the spiritual world consider that the transcendental eternal existence of the living entities is to be either in complete knowledge or devoid of knowledge. Due to their lack of faith in the existence of the spiritual world, those who reject its existence endeavor for material enjoyment while living in this world. In their independent spirit they do not serve anyone other than themselves. Following in their footsteps, those who claim to accept the existence of the spiritual world accept the impersonal Brahman as the supreme goal while concocting various objects of worship for themselves.

There are two concepts of impersonal philosophy-denial of spiritual propensities and denial of spiritual activities, both devoid of eternal worship. When people consider the absence of the conscious function as

the

goal of life it results in sunyavada, or voidism. And when they consider the idea that consciousness is devoid of activity it is called Mayavada, or spiritualism without variety. In their ordinary activities, the voidists give respect to the niti-sastras, or social codes. And the Mayavadis, considering consciousness covered by ignorance as the Supreme

Lord, create five different idols and address the totality of ignorance as the Supreme Lord. Due to the absence of nondual knowledge, the so-called

liberated Mayavadis consider themselves as temporary worshipers and worship five gods. Observing their complete absence of devotional propensities, Sri Vyasadeva has written in the Padma Purana as follows:

*dvau bhuta-sargau loke 'smin    daiva asura eva ca  
visnu-bhaktah smrto daiva    asuras tad-viparyayah*

"There are two kinds of created beings in this world, godly and demoniac. Those dedicated to the devotional service of Lord Visnu are godly, and those opposed to such service are demoniac."

In other words, varnasrama-dharma is of two varieties. That which is established on the basis of devotional service to Lord Visnu is called daiva, and the opposite variety, meaning that kind of varnasrama in which there is no exclusive devotion to the Supreme Lord, which denies His eternal name, form, qualities, and pastimes, and which considers spiritual objects as illusory and thus recommends the worship of five gods is called material enjoyment-prone adaiva.

An elaboration on this verse is given by Sri Krsna-dvaipayana in the Srimad

Bhagavatam (11.5.3) as follows:

*ya esam purusam saksad atma-prabhavam isvaram  
na bhajanty avajananti sthanad bhrastah patanty adhah*

"If any of the members of the four varnas (brahmanas, ksatriyas, vaisyas, or sudras) and four asramas (brahmacari, grhastha, vanaprastha, or sannyasa) fail to worship or intentionally disrespect the Personality of Godhead, who is the source of their own creation, they fall down from their position, in other words, they fall from daiva-varnasrama into the contrary situation of the demonic varnasrama."

The varnasrama followed by the atheists or those who worship five gods is

nothing like the daiva-varnasrama ascertained by the devotees of Visnu. It

is stated in the Srimad Bhagavatam (7.11.35) as follows:

*yasya yal laksanam proktam pumso varnabhivyanjakam*

*yad anyatrapi drsyeta tat tenaiva vinirdiset*

"If one shows the symptoms of being a brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya or sudra,

as described above, even if he has appeared in a different class, he

should be accepted according to those symptoms of classification." If one

rejects this process, he will incur sin. The process of assigning

designations is that one should give an unreformed person the opportunity

to purify himself by the ten purificatory processes, engage in studying

the Vedas, engage in the six activities beginning with worship and

teaching worship, become situated in pure conduct, eat the remnants of the

spiritual master, become attached to the spiritual master, observe regular

vows, and be truthful. But if the symptoms of vaisyas and sudras appear

in

a brahmana who has undergone the ten purificatory processes, then either

he should be deprived of his purified status or he should be engaged appropriately as a vaisya-this is honesty. To act contrary to this is selfishness and laxity in following the injunctions of scripture.

From the statements of the smrtis, as quoted by Nilakantha in his commentary on Mahabharata (Santi-parva 189.2), we receive the following

information:

*yasyaite 'sta-catvarimsat samskarah sa brahmanah*

"One who has performed these forty-eight kinds of samskaras is a brahmana. In the opinion of those who follow the path of karma, the forty-eight samskaras are as follows: (1) garbhadhana, impregnation, (2) pum-savana, causing the birth of a male child, (3) simantonnayana, parting of the hair, (4) jata-karma, the duties after the birth of a child, (5) nama-karana, naming ceremony, (6) niskramana, taking the child out of the

room for the first time, (7) anna-prasana, eating grains, (8) karna-vedha, piercing ears, (9) cauda-karma, shaving the head, (10) upanayana, the sacred thread, (11) samavartana, completing education, (12) vivaha, marriage, (13) antyesti, funeral, (14) deva-yajna, sacrifice for the gods, (15) pitr-yajna, sacrifice for the forefathers, (16) bhuta-yajna, sacrifice for all living beings, (17) nara-yajna, sacrifice for human beings, (18) atithi-yajna, sacrifice for guests, (19)

deva-vrata-catustaya, four kinds of Vedic vows, (20) astaka-sraddha, eight

kinds of sraddha, (21) parvana-sraddha, (22) sravani, (23) agrayani, (24) prausthapadi, (25) caitri, (26) asvayuji, (27) agny-adhana, (28)

agnihotra, (29) darsa-purnamasi, (30) agrayanesti, (31) caturmasya, (32) nirudha-pasubandha, (33) sautramani, (34) agnistoma, (35) atyagnistoma,

(36) uktha, (37) sodasi, (38) vajpeya, (39) atiratra, (40) aptoryama, (41) rajasuya and so on, names of various sacrifices, (42) sarva-bhuta-daya, mercy to all living entities, (43) loka-dvaya-caturtha, (44) ksanti, forgiveness, (45) anasuya, freedom from envy, (46) sauca, cleanliness, (47) anayasa-mangalacara, auspicious acts done without endeavor, (48) akarpanya asprha, freedom from miserliness and from desire.

In the opinion of the followers of the bhagavata-marga, there are forty-eight samskaras mentioned in the Mahabharata. Among them, tapa, pundra, and nama are samskaras meant for the kanistha-adhikaris. These

three plus mantra and yoga are the five samskaras meant for the madhyama-adhikaris. The uttama-adhikaris accept the nine activities of worship, the twenty-five samskaras of the Artha-pancaka and the nine brahminical samskaras. In the initiation ceremony, when mantras are given,

the acceptance of the ten brahminical samskaras, beginning with garbhadhana, is included. The maha-bhagavatas are qualified for accepting

nine samskaras, which brings the total to forty-eight samskaras. When Sri

Yamunacarya and Apayya Diksita say that there are forty samskaras, this is

reconciled by counting all the brahminical samskaras as one.>

In Sri Yamunacarya's Agama-pramanya it is stated:

*yad apy uktam garbhadhanadi-dahanta-samskarantara-sevanad*

*bhagavatanam abrahmanyam iti, tatrapy-ajnanam evaparadhyati, na punar*

*ayusmato dosah; yad ete vamsa-paramparaya vajasaneya-sakham  
adhiyanah*

*katyayanadi-grhyokta-margena garbhadhanadi-samskaran kurvate; ye  
punah*

*savitry-anuvacana-prabhrti-trayi-dharma-tyagena ekayana-sruti-vihitan  
eva*

*catvarimsat samskaran kurvate te 'pi sva-sakha-grhyoktam artham yatha-  
vad*

*anutisthamanah na sakhantariya-karmanusthanad brahmanyat  
pracyavante,*

*anyesam api para-sakha-vihita-karmanusthana-nimittabrahmanya-  
prasangat.*

"Those who say that the bhagavatas are fallen from the status of  
brahmanas

because they have given up the Vedic samskaras beginning with the  
garbhadhana-samskara and ending with the funeral ceremony and have  
accepted an alternative system of purificatory rituals are ignorant  
offenders. In fact, however, the long-lived speakers of these statement  
are not at all wrong, since having studied the Vajasaneya branch of the  
Vedas which belongs to their family tradition, the bhagavatas perform  
their garbhadhana and other samskaras in accordance to the methods  
prescribed by the Grhya-sutras of Katyayana and others. Furthermore,  
these



bhagavatas who have abandoned Vedic duties such as savitry-anuvacana

(chanting the Vedic mantras which establish someone as a wearer of the sacrificial thread) and instead observe the forty samskaras enjoined in the Ekayana-sruti are properly adhering to the principles enunciated in the Grhya-sutras of their own branch and thus have never fallen from the status of brahmanas on account of not performing the rituals of a different branch. After all, if by not following the rules of all the Vedic branches a brahmana becomes fallen, then the followers of other branches would also have to be considered fallen from brahminical status because they do not perform the rituals of other branches."

The community of sense enjoyers who are devoid of devotional service and

bereft of simplicity disrespect the Absolute Truth and can never be accepted by the initiated devotees of Lord Visnu. In order to maintain their self-interest, the ignorant asslike community exhibit envy of daiva-varnasrama and thus prove their disqualification. Simply because the demoniac community is fallen, that does not mean the daiva-varnasrama community has to join them. The devotee community is always ready to

disassociate from the demoniac followers of Visvasrava's son [Ravana] and

always eager to associate with Hiranyakasipu's son, Prahlada. The godly devotees of Visnu also appear in demoniac families. And it is not unheard of for those who are averse to the devotional service of Lord Visnu to take birth in the families of demigods and brahmanas. The devotees of Visnu can take birth in all types of families. Yet if one considers that they are following demoniac varnasrama because they are situated in an inappropriate family due to their past activities and birth in a particular family, the daiva-varnasrama community, who are devoted to Visnu, do not

agree. The acaryas of the Vaisnava sampradayas do not accept either the

worship of five gods by the impersonalist sampradaya or the immature application of varnasrama principles. Due to humility, the swanlike

Vaisnavas do not formally accept the symptoms of varnasrama. That is why

the Vaisnava acaryas did not always push them to give up their humility

and perform ordinary Vedic rituals. Whenever the Vaisnavas are abused by

the followers of demoniac varnasrama, pure varnasrama is protected by the

understanding that varna is determined according to qualification.

We have cited the histories of more than a thousand followers of pure varnasrama in the Prakrti-jana-kanda of this book. Apart from those, many

other topics concerning the topmost position of Vaisnavas who renounce nondevotional varnasrama and nondevotee behavior are found in the scriptures. Particularly due to their Vaisnava behavior, there was no obstacle in accepting them as initiated brahmanas.

The following of pure varnasrama has not been stopped in the Sri Ramanandi

branch of the Sri Ramanuja-sampradaya. Pure varnasrama was functioning in

this same way in ancient times. Due to the gradual increase in selfishness

and material absorption the real purport of varnasrama has been forgotten

and a lifeless varnasrama has become current. We cannot call the current

system daiva-varnasrama. Srimad Gopala Bhattapada, the smṛty-acarya of the

Sri Gaudiya Vaisnava-sampradaya, has given the arrangement for purifying

qualified students of all varnas through ten Vedic samskaras in pursuance

of the daiva-varnasrama principles. Following his directions, the samskara

of brahmana initiation by qualification was begun long ago and is still practiced today in the sampradaya of Sri Syamananda-deva, the branch of

Sri Nityananda, the sampradaya of Sri Krsnadasa Navina-hoda, and the branch of Gaura's follower Raghunandana. Moreover, descendants of various

branches of the Gaudiya Vaisnava grhasthas who have fallen from the standard due to their indifference to spiritual life consider themselves as belonging to their previous seminal caste. It is the nature of unqualified people to identify themselves as belonging to a low class. Sometimes the seminal descendants of an acarya become bereft of devotional service and

think that following the principles of demoniac varnasrama is their constitutional duty. Fearing their social degradation, such people even associate intimately with nondevotee worshipers of the five gods. Such exchanges are meant only for fallen people who are indifferent to spiritual life.

Although it is accepted that out of Vaisnava magnanimity a devotee of Visnu

can take birth among miscreants, the statement of the scriptures that says, "A Vaisnava purifies and delivers whichever family he appears in," has now simply turned into some words. All the same, we should know that a

Vaisnava does not take birth in any family at all. It should be understood that even if Vaisnavas do take birth, demoniac self-centered communities do not accept them. The pure form of varnasrama can never be found in any

society that has become degraded due to the absence of devotion to Visnu.

The Padma Purana states:

*sva-pakam iva nekseta    loke vipram avaisnavam  
vaisnavo varno-bahyo 'pi    punati bhuvana-trayam  
na sudra bhagavad-bhaktas    te tu bhagavata matah  
sarva-varnesu te sudra    ye na bhakta janardane  
sudram va bhagavad-bhaktam    nisadam sva-pacam tatha  
viksate jati-samanyat    sa yati narakam dhruvam  
bhaktir asta-vidha hy esa    yasmin mlecche 'pi vartate  
sa viprendro muni-sresthah    sa jnani sa ca panditah  
tasmai deyam tato grahyam    sa ca pujo yatha harih*

"If a person born in a brahmana family is an avaisnava, a nondevotee, one

should not see his face, exactly as one should not see the face of a candala, or dog-eater. A Vaisnava, however, can purify the three worlds, no matter what varna he was born in.

"Devotees of the Lord are never sudras, rather they are all first-class bhagavatas. But if one is not a devotee of Lord Krsna, he should be considered a sudra even if he was born in a brahmana, ksatriya or vaisya family.

"One who considers a devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead who was

born in a family of sudras, nisadas, or candalas to belong to that particular caste certainly goes to hell."

"If these eight types of devotional service are seen in a person, even if he was born in a family of mlecchas, then such a topmost brahmana, best of

sages, jnani, and pandita should be offered food and his remnants should be accepted, for such a Vaisnava is as worshipable as the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

All these statements of the scriptures are meant for uplifting the fallen followers of varnasrama and for humiliating the followers of varnasrama who are devoid of devotional service.

The Srimad Bhagavatam (11.17.10, 12-13) states:

*adau krta-yuge varno nram hamsa iti smrtah  
krta-krtayah praja jatya tasmad krta-yugam viduh  
treta-mukhe maha-bhaga pranam me hrdayat trayi  
vidya pradurabhut tasya aham asam tri-vrn makham  
vipra-ksatriya-vit-sudra mukha-bahuru-pada-jah  
vairajat purusaj jata ya atmacara-laksanah*

"In the beginning, in Satya-yuga, there is only one social class, called hamsa, to which all human beings belong. In that age all people are unalloyed devotees of the Lord from birth, and thus learned scholars call this first age Krta-yuga, or the age in which all religious duties are perfectly fulfilled.

"O greatly fortunate one, at the beginning of Treta-yuga Vedic knowledge appeared from My heart, which is the abode of the air of life, in three divisions-as Rg, Sama, and Yajur. Then from that knowledge I appeared as threefold sacrifice.

"In Treta-yuga the four social orders were manifested from the universal form of the Personality of Godhead. The brahmanas appeared from the Lord's face, the ksatriyas from the Lord's arms, the vaisyas from the Lord's thighs and the sudras from the legs of that mighty form. Each social division was recognized by its particular duties and behavior."

In the beginning there is only one social class called hamsa. Later, when Satya-yuga was finished and Treta-yuga began, the four varnas were divided according to qualifications and activities.

In the Srimad Bhagavatam (11.5.2) it is stated:

*mukha-bahuru-padebhyah purusasyasramaih saha  
catvaro jajnire varna gunair vipradayah prthak*



"Each of the four social orders, headed by the brahmanas, was born through

different combinations of the modes of nature, from the face, arms, thighs and feet of the Supreme Lord in His universal form. Thus the four spiritual orders were also generated."

In other words, the brahmanas were born from the mouth of the universal form through the mode of goodness, the ksatriyas were born from His arms

through the mode of passion, the vaisyas were born from His thighs through

the modes of passion and ignorance, and the sudras were born from His feet

through the mode of ignorance.

In the Srimad Bhagavatam (11.17.14) it is also said:

*grhasramo jaghanato brahmacaryam hrdo mama*

*vaksah-sthalad vane-vasah sannyasah sirasi sthitah*

The sannyasis appeared from the head of the universal form, the brahmacaris

came from the heart, the vanaprasthas appeared from the chest, and the grhasthas appeared from the loins. In course of time, people deviated from

the principles of varnasrama and began to ignore the qualifications. That is why the varnas are presently ascertained only by seminal consideration.

If the ascertainment of varna by qualification is completely discarded, however, and ascertainment only through seminal consideration is followed,

then the upanayana-samskara, or sacred thread ceremony, should be given

along with the jata-samskara, or birth ceremony. But instead of this, a person's propensities should be examined, and if the mode of goodness is

seen, then he should be awarded the sacred thread and be allowed to study

the Vedas. The upanayana-samskara must be awarded in the early stage of

one's life. After undergoing this samskara one is allowed to study the

Vedas and perform other rituals. But if one wants to become a brahmana a

the end of one's life, there are many Vedic mantras that oppose this. If one does not begin to study the Vedas at the proper time, one will not have the fortune of becoming competent. If one spends most of his life

uselessly as a ksatriya, vaisya, or sudra, then his spiritual progress is hindered. That is why persons like Visvamitra and Vitahavya had to struggle hard to become brahmanas. Many times ksatriya, vaisya, and sudra

children were awarded the upanayana-samskara and accepted as brahmanas

after their propensity or nature was examined by an acarya. Those who failed to exhibit higher propensities at the proper time were obliged to accept a varna according to their nature. The Mahabharata, the Hari-vamsa,

the eighteen Puranas, and other ancient histories of India are evidence of this fact. Whenever an acarya was not able to determine a person's varna,

he was considered as being of the same varna as his father. In the Mahabharata it is mentioned that in the age of Kali there will be doubts about deciding person's varna according to seminal consideration. The principle qualifications of brahmanas, who are in the mode of goodness, are simplicity and truthfulness. But there are many opinions regarding seminal qualifications.

The time for examining a person's worldly inclination is between the ages of eight and twenty-two. According to worldly considerations, if a

student's position remains undetermined through this period of examination, he is called a vratya. This does not mean, however, that the spiritual inclinations of a person should be examined in the same way. The

reason for this is that a person's inclination for spiritual life may arise by some good fortune at any time. Then he should no longer be considered a fallen vratya, and if evidence of devotional service to Lord Visnu is found in him, there is no harm in calling him a Brahman-realized spiritualist. Unqualified vratyas are often awarded spiritual or pancaratika initiation. The spiritual activities of a duly initiated brahmana are called performance of Vedic sacrifice. The Vedic initiation of a vratya who has not first acquired the qualifications for brahminical initiation should not be accepted as authentic. Since it is not possible to properly execute the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies in this age of quarrel, Kali-yuga, those who have taken savitrya brahminical initiation should be known as sudra-kalpa, as good as sudras. Therefore, all sampradayas agree that rather than considering how to enhance one's position, one should accept initiation according to the pancaratika system and engage oneself in the activities enjoined in the Vedas. In this way the biased opinions of conflicting parties are reconciled through the combined help of the Vedas and Pancaratras. During the Buddhist

revolution

in India, when it became impossible to carry out Vedic duties without deviation, such instructions were often accepted in order to reestablish the principles of varnasrama. When people's spiritual endeavors gradually diminished and society fell from the devotional service of Lord Visnu, people began following a distorted system of varnasrama.

There are two kinds of varnasrama-demoniac and divine. The system of varnasrama that is based on fruitive activities meant for material enjoyment that is followed by those who are averse to Lord Hari is called demoniac varnasrama, and the other is the varnasrama of the community of those who want to serve Hari. This has already been elaborately described.

Both the seminal brahmana community and the initiated brahmana community can progress side-by-side towards spiritual life if they put aside their quarrels. But if they fall from their goal and become the servants of worldly lust, then they will not have the good fortune of becoming eternal Hari-janas. If one gives up spiritual practices to protect demoniac society and if one glorifies the system of materialistic varnasrama, it

will certainly hamper one's eternal auspiciousness. Pseudo devotees should

impartially consider what benefit can be achieved if one's spiritual life is covered by mundane selfishness. We will hereby refrain from publicly discussing their foolishness. If we see that they are gradually and silently progressing toward the spiritual kingdom, then our happiness will increase.

The followers of varnasrama who are on the path of spiritual life under the

guidance of the paramahamsas are not mad with the false pride of the temporary material world; therefore they can become transcendently situated. When they actually attain such an impartial platform, they will understand that worship with material desires is mundane and that there is

no conflict between one's constitutional duties, in the form of love for

Kṛṣṇa, and dāiva-varnasrama. When a person is maddened to defy a Vaisnava

with his body and mind, it is to be understood that he is not situated in his constitutional position as spirit soul. Only Vaisnavas are qualified to worship Lord Viṣṇu. The material body and mind cannot worship Viṣṇu through the medium of matter. The followers of demoniac varnasrama can

never worship Visnu. Their worship of Visnu pricks Him like a pin. It is not possible to worship Visnu without first worshipping the Vaisnavas. Most

persons who have studied the scriptures should know that before worshipping

Visnu one must worship the spiritual master and Ganesa, who is a Vaisnava

and the destroyer of obstacles. According to the logic of half-hen, or ardhha-kukkuti, there is no value in worshipping Visnu without worshipping the Vaisnavas.

Only a Vaisnava is capable of giving others the right to worship Visnu.

Those who are envious of the Vaisnavas can never give Visnu mantras to others. A person who does not worship or who criticizes the spiritual master and the Vaisnavas is not qualified to receive a Visnu mantra. If a person is not qualified to own something, how can he give it to others?

Therefore the scriptures declare that one cannot worship Visnu with mantras that are received from a nondevotee. One should give up the association of such nondevotees and take initiation, in the form of transcendental knowledge, from a Vaisnava spiritual master. Unless one gives up the bad association of persons who are averse to the Vaisnavas,

he achieves no benefit. Wise Vaisnava acaryas like Srila Ganganarayana

Cakravarti and Sri Ramakrsna Bhattacharya took initiation from Vaisnavas and thus established spiritual life as the highest goal in this world.

Learned persons who want to act piously in human life perform the sacrificial performance called sraddha in order to show gratefulness to their forefathers and deliver them from ghostly life. Although this ceremony is taken seriously by the general, ungrateful human society, in spiritual life it is not practiced in the same way. All living entities are servants of Krsna. When they forget that they are transcendental servants of the Lord, they are seen to traverse the field of activities through the endeavors of their bodies and minds. But this is not the eternal function of the pure soul. It is superficial and based on nothing more than material desires. The spiritual community serves their worshipable departed elders by faithfully offering them sri maha-prasada. This is completely different from the fruitive method of offering sraddha. The Vaisnavas are completely unable to concur with the beliefs of the fruitive workers, because this would obstruct their spiritual progress. Simply because the Vaisnavas live in the social shadow of the godless materialists, they should not deviate from their goal and forsake their



spiritual life. The process of Vaisnava sraddha mentioned in Sri Hari-bhakti-vilasa should be followed by devotees in all respects.

The conceptions of purity and impurity and proper and improper codes of conduct are accepted by the daiva and asura varnasrama systems in different ways. A Vaisnava does not subscribe to any activity that hinders his spiritual life. The worldly smartas simply consider the purity and impurity of objects. Since they have no spiritual knowledge at all, whatever standards they establish may not necessarily be accepted by transcendentalists. It is not logical to try to place the smartas and Vaisnavas on equal level, because their behavior and activities are different. Though a brahmacari is forbidden from sexual activities, in the grhasthas' code of conduct there are various circumstances in which sexual

activity is appropriate. Should grhasthas therefore be condemned?  
Behavior

in accordance with one's status is said to be virtuous, although the same cannot be accepted as proper for someone whose status is different. The behavior of a Vaisnava or paramahansa is totally different from the behavior of a follower of arnasrama. Therefore attempts to consider their activities on an equal level are offensive.

This Vyavahara-kanda needs to be elaborately discussed, and since such

discussion is not feasible at this time we are ending this comparative essay, waiting for the opportunity for further discussion.

om harih. Sri Sri Gaura-Nityanandau jayatah

## **Appendixes**

(written by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī Gosvami Prabhupada)

Acarya-santana

How to respect an acarya and his offspring.

Those who are endowed with spiritual power and who properly follow the religious principles are called acaryas. And those who serve Lord Hari following in the footsteps of the acaryas are known as pure devotees under the shelter of the acaryas. The Supreme Lord has said, “You should know Me as an acarya, therefore never disrespect an acarya in any way.” Just as a disciple is duty-bound to show respect and devotion to his spiritual master, he should show similar respect to the children, friends, and relatives of the spiritual master. How one should behave and respect the spiritual master's santana, or children, is found in many places in the Dharma-sastras. Considering the children of the acarya as superior to themselves, like the acarya, the pure devotees respect them accordingly. To show respect to the family of the acarya is also proper etiquette and approved by the sastras. (Sajjana-tosani, Vol. 19, Part 2)

The difference between the parivara and the santana of an acarya.

The two principle servants of Sri Mahaprabhu were Sri Prabhu Nityananda and Sri Prabhu Advaita. Since Sri Nityananda Prabhu and Sri Advaita Prabhu accepted the grhastha-asrama, Their seminal descendants are known as acarya-santana. Their surrendered servants and devotees in the disciplic succession are also known as Their santana. In Bengal, the servants in the disciplic succession are called

parivara, or family, and seminal descendants are called santana. When one mentions the vamsa, or dynasty, of an acarya, it refers to his seminal children as well as his disciples.

Due to lack of renounced disciples, the seminal offspring are unduly respected.

Since there is an abundance of householders following the line of the smartas in Bengal, there is a considerable lack of renounced persons in the disciplic line. That is why the seminal descendants, while attempting to impress or prove mastery over the uneducated householders, have caused great harm to the eternal religious principles. What to speak of this, even ordinary nondevotee householders are so mad about the acarya-santana that they consider giving mundane social respect to those sons is actually devotional service to Hari, and thus they often became averse to Hari. In many instances these seminal sons of the acaryas award titles like “qualified devotee” to members of the uneducated community, while in fact making them averse to devotional service.

The acarya-santana's activities hostile to devotional service and service to the six enemies.

The seminal offspring of the acaryas have sometimes acted foolishly, become averse to Lord Hari, indulged in accumulating excessive wealth and women, professionally recited scriptures like the Sri mad Bhagavatam for the sake of money, become professional story tellers, displayed expertise in dancing and voracious eating while conducting twenty-four hour kirtana, imparted mantras in return for money and clothes, and in the process engaged in activities hostile to devotional service.

Just after the disappearance of Sriman Mahaprabhu these misfortunes caused turmoil in the Vaisnava families of the world and resulted in degradation. At that time, following in the footsteps of the eight Gosvamis of Vraja, acaryas empowered by Sri Mahaprabhu headed by Srinivasa Acarya Prabhu, Narottama dasa Thakura, and Syamananda Prabhu tried to keep the preaching of devotional service intact. Later, during the time of their descendants, the flow of pure devotional service was again covered. Again the acarya-santana became averse to Hari, which affected the flow of pure devotional service. This diverted the acarya-santana in various ways from their predecessors' line. If the children of the acaryas lead a pious life and engage in devotional service, then the whole world will benefit from their behavior. The great disturbances that are often created by the six enemies such as lust, anger, and greed among the acarya-santana are not unknown to the pure devotees.

Being the offspring of Lord Brahma, every living entity is an acarya-santana.

Brahma, the original spiritual master, is the foremost acarya. From him the four varnas and other living entities have taken birth. According to the different occupations, various varnas and castes were created among the descendants. Actually all living entities are santana of the original acarya, Lord Brahma. Sri Gaurasundara and His associates especially tried to keep the acarya-santana's service attitude intact, just like their fathers.

Due to lack of renounced disciples, the seminal offspring unduly respected.

As a result of their previous karma, the offspring of the acarya often lack the qualities of a real acarya. Ignorance, foolishness, and nondevotional activities have in some places influenced the acarya-santana and their followers to become averse to Lord Hari. In other places, hypocrisy has created confusion among the acarya-santana and perversity among their followers. Due to artificiality and hypocrisy some acarya-santana became overwhelmed by material sense objects and absorbed in sense gratification while accumulating money. Yet in other places they have propagated ignorance as an ornament of devotional service. The result has been that many nondevotees are considering that worship of Hari is

a kind of hypocrisy, and thus the preaching of pure devotional service has been halted.

Instruction to the acarya-santana.

All living entities created by the Supreme Lord are offspring of the acarya. Our humble request at their lotus feet is that they should learn the foremost teaching of Sri Gaurasundara: "Being nonduplicious and lower than the straw, more tolerant than a tree, respectful to everyone while thinking oneself most fallen, one should always chant the names of Krsna." Then foolish persons like us will realize the quality of an acarya among those living entities who are acarya-santana, cross the insurmountable ocean of material existence, and constantly engage in the service of Hari. (Sajjana-tosani, Vol.19, Part 2 )

Vaisnava-vamsa

Kanistha-adhikaris are materialistic Vaisnavas.

In this material world we find that the Vaisnavas are situated in three different levels. Actually all animate objects are servants of Krsna. Ordinary people as well as kanistha-adhikari and madhyama-adhikari Vaisnavas consider those who do not exhibit any symptoms of inclination towards Krsna as averse to Hari. But although they are nondevotees, they are nevertheless servants of Lord Visnu. Lord Vasudeva is situated in everyone's heart. If Lord Visnu were not present in every higher or lower object of this material world, then nothing could exist.

We can see that servants of Visnu who are on the platform of kanistha-adhikara have started worshiping the Deity of Lord Visnu with faith but have not yet realized themselves. That is why the Vaisnavas on the kanistha-adhikara platform are glorified by Srimad Bhagavatam as materialistic rather than transcendental.

The gradual advancement of kanistha-adhikaris.

The neophytes, while serving the Supreme Lord with great faith, attain the mercy of the Lord. Then they get the opportunity to gradually give up their material conceptions. At that time, the desire for sense enjoyment,

the performance of pious activities, and even the position of a mundane impersonalist who searches after Brahman appear insignificant to these kanistha-adhikarī Vaisnavas. They then became detached from material objects. Then their pride born of varna and wealth as well as their material sense gratification begin to diminish. While cultivating spiritual life, the materialistic Vaisnavas change their platform just as a leech changes its color.

The Madhyama-adhikara of Vaisnava.

We can see that due to their cultivation of spiritual life, the madhyama-adhikarīs see the same Deity form as the kanistha-adhikarīs, yet with more mature spiritual vision. On that platform they do not consider the Deity as made of material elements. They then experience contact with the spiritual entity in their own existence and become qualified to discriminate between the different positions of the different devotees. Being situated on such a platform, they love all living entities, make friendship with those who are inclined towards Kṛṣṇa, benefit others by preaching devotional service to Kṛṣṇa, and give up the association of persons averse to the Lord. At this juncture they face various obstacles. Sometimes they are subdued by self-worshipping Mayavadis, sometimes they are condemned by foolish pious people, and sometimes they are attacked by unregulated persons who are simply absorbed in eating and drinking.

The gradual advancement of the madhyama-adhikarīs.

The madhyama-adhikarīs gladly tolerate these disturbances and by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa never deviate from the service of Hari. Since the madhyama-adhikarī's position is more fixed than the neophytes, who are prone to fall down, they cannot be threatened by persons who are averse to Hari. The madhyama-adhikarīs realize that the Lord is situated in their hearts. As caitya-guru in the heart of the devotees,

Lord Kṛṣṇa attracts them, considering them His own. By the mercy of Hari, the spiritual master, and the Vaisnavas, the madhyama-adhikarīs attain complete transcendental realization. In ordinary language this is called self-realization.

The advanced platform of Vaisnava.

The position known by jnanis as jivan-mukta, or liberated even in this life, is known in the language of pure Vaisnavas as self-realization, or being situated in the transcendental position. In that state one has no engagement other than service to Krsna. Those who quarrel over the ingredients of service cannot imagine the advanced position. Those who consider the clay pot of Sri Srimad Visnupada Gaurakisora dasa Babaji, his eating of uncooked foodstuffs, his intense renunciation, and his encouragement to the sahajiyas as ingredients for the service of Hari, and thus become absorbed in them, will simply be pulling the skin of the fruit while rejecting the pulp. Those who are maddened by material objects rather than spiritual, will never be able to understand the activities of the maha- bhagavatas, or exalted devotees. As long as one considers the ingredients of service equal to those fit for one's own material enjoyment, he can never have spiritual realization.

Vaisnava-vamsa and its reversion.

We find vamsas, or dynasties, of the above-mentioned three types of Vaisnavas in this world. Vamsa does not only refer to the seminal descendants. The dynasties in this world are produced by licit association with woman according to the principles of varnasrama. But we cannot say that this is the only pure, unadulterated, ongoing process. By the combination of father and mother the child is born. All men are capable of begetting various offspring in the wombs of their respective wives. Therefore unadulterated fatherhood cannot be imposed on the sons of the gross seminal dynasties.

Seminal birth and duties towards parents.

The parents are the principle servants of their sons. They serve their child from his birth by various direct and indirect activities of their body, mind, and speech. In order to repay these debts, the grateful sons must serve their parents as their primary duty. Yet the son does not become fit to serve his parents immediately after his birth. After a long time, when he grows up and becomes matured, then his service attitude is awakened. Then as a successor of his parents he realizes his duty to

serve his parents. This is the seminal dynasty, wherein the experiences exhibited by the parents become prominent in the heart.

Second birth through initiation and duty towards the acarya.

We know that apart from seminal birth, a living entity takes another birth in the family of an acarya. When a living entity attains his second birth, he becomes freed from the condemnation of taking only one birth. The acarya and Gayatri give him a second birth, called savitra. At that time, having received his second birth in the family of an acarya, he can more properly understand his duties as a servant. The parents serve their child as long as he remains at home. As soon as his knowledge is developed, he is first sent to gurukula. Then while staying in gurukula he understands his duties towards his parents. The acarya, however, does not become a servant of the child like his parents. The twice-born child receives more opportunity to serve the acarya. The twice-born, who is a servant of the acarya, considers the home of the acarya as his own and takes responsibility to serve the acarya in various ways.

The two types of Vedic instructions.

The twice-born student receives knowledge of the Vedas and Vedic literatures from his acarya. The Vedic literatures recommend two kinds of instructions. One is to adjust with the material nature while remaining in this world. And the other is to be educated in eternal spiritual subject matters.

If the acarya is a worshiper of temporary religious principles, then he will instruct his disciples about temporary worship, such as karma or jnana. But if the acarya is a devotee instead of a smarta, then he will teach the most confidential subject matters of the Vedas. Though he receives Vedic instructions from the acarya, a disciple who has a taste for material objects and is thus absorbed in mundane conceptions considers materialistic household duties as the purpose of human life. But if the acarya is a devotee, then he teaches the ripened fruit of the Vedic tree, bhagavata-dharma, from the Vedic literature and helps living entities attain eternal life. He also teaches them the difference between eternal and temporary life. Being under the control of insignificant greed or



material enjoyment, a student returns home after completing his formalities with the acarya simply to engage in fruitive activities. One who considers material assets very insignificant and useless for spiritual life and is attracted towards spiritual life accepts brhad-vrata (celibacy) rather than returning home, or he returns home and accepts spiritual initiation.

Initiation and duty towards the spiritual master.

The spiritual acarya is known as guru. He awards third birth to the living entities by giving them initiation, in the form of imparting transcendental knowledge. In this third birth a person engages in spiritual cultivation and attains freedom from material conceptions. We have already discussed that a vamsa does not expand only through saukra-janma, or seminal birth, rather it also expands through savitra and daiksajanmas, or Vedic and spiritual initiations.

The differences in saukra-janma from savitra and daiksajanmas.

Although residing with an acarya or a transcendental guru is different from extending the seminal line, due to the similarity in succession all three lines are called vamsas, or dynasties. In seminal birth, the son has a limited service attitude towards his father, but among those who have taken savitra or daiksa-janma, Vedic initiation or spiritual initiation, the sense of serving their acarya or spiritual master respectively is greater. On the path of devotional service, the successors are appreciated according to their degree of service. Just as the son of a doctor does not necessarily inherit his father's medical knowledge, rather his knowledge depends on his personal experience in that field, similarly being the (seminal) son of a Vaisnava guru does not in itself qualify one as an acarya or spiritual master. Nor is it found in any sastra or spiritual practices that spiritual authority should be entrusted only on the saukra-vamsa, or seminal dynasty. Only some duplicitous, selfish, nondevotee householders advertise this opinion.

The vamsas of sannyasi gurus of authorized sampradayas are confined to their disciplic succession. It is written in the Padma Purana that

mantras received from unauthorized disciplic lines do not produce any result.

The evil intentions of deceitful sampradayas.

Many new philosophies have been manufactured in order to cheat foolish people, and ordinary selfish people who are maddened with material pride cannot ascertain the truth by defeating these philosophies. Thus pseudo sampradayas spread their net to cover the truth. Falling in their trap, many unfortunate people are deviated from the truth and become entangled in the net of anarthas rather than progress in spiritual life. If the son of a doctor treats people without mastering medical knowledge, if the son of a train driver begins to drive trains without sufficient knowledge about the mechanism of the engine, or if the son of an expert swimmer who is unable to swim like his father takes others in the deep water to teach them swimming, one can easily imagine the venomous results they will produce.

The Conclusion.

We may go on bragging that we are born in the seminal dynasty of a Vaisnava and we may exhibit lifeless limbs of devotional service, but unless we have firm faith in the service of Hari we will simply cheat ourselves and become enemies of society. Acyuta-gotra is never a saukra-gotra, or seminal family, therefore Vaisnava vamsa does not refer only to the seminal dynasty. The spiritual Vaisnavas who belong to the Acyuta-gotra, or family of Krsna, entrust their respective authority only to their most confidential servants. The unqualified descendants can never claim to be successors just because they were born in that family. Even if they achieve such a position, they are unable to protect it. These facts are similarly applicable to the dynasties of Lord Visnu as well. Specifically, the Lord and His devotees appear in different dynasties at different times, and there are no obstacles for nondevotees and demons to take birth in such families. The son of Lord Visnu is not Lord Visnu, but a Vaisnava. So from the third generation there is no difference between the descendants of Visnu and the descendants of the Vaisnavas. (Sajjana-tosani, Vol. 19, Part 7/8)

Smarta Raghunandana. (Preface)

Raghunandana, the principle smarta of Bengal.

Many children, old people, and women of the Hindu Aryan community of Bengal have heard the name of Raghunandana. Those who have not heard will naturally be curious to know who he is. Raghunandana's identification in brief is that he is the principle smarta of Bengal.

The Absolute Truth appears through the descending process.

Smarta refers to those who know the smrtis; therefore it is natural to inquire what is a smrti. Knowledge of the Supreme Truth was manifested by the Lord of Vaikuntha in the heart of Brahma through the descending process. Sri Narada received this knowledge from Lord Brahma and then imparted it to Vyasadeva. Brahma spoke about the Absolute Truth to Narada; Narada then spoke to Vyasadeva. From Vyasa, the Absolute Truth has been handed down through disciple succession in the authorized sampradayas.

The Absolute Truth is obstructed through the ascending process of the seminal line.

From Brahma, the sages were born through seminal succession. Rather than descending through disciplic succession like the path of devotees, the path of the sages, being induced by material knowledge, has diverted into the ascending process. The sages and the three varnas who are subordinate to the sages consider their material knowledge beneficial for themselves, and with the support of direct perception and hypothesis, they obstruct the descending process of disciplic succession. Those who traverse the descending process are qualified to reach the Absolute Truth. But since those who traverse the ascending process have accepted the external ascending path to reach the undisputed destination, they have become eager to minimize the glories of the Absolute Truth. As a result, even though they proudly advertise their faith in the Vedas, their actual intention is to disregard the Vedas. This is clearly understood.

Differences of opinion occur only in the ascending process; there are no differences

of opinion in the descending process, rather there is complete harmony in diversity.

Whenever the sages gave explanations on the Vedas that were contrary to the actual purport of the Vedas, differences in their respective realizations arose. On the ascending path, one sage attacks another sage and tries to establish his own opinion. In the descending path, however, there is no such outrage or drawback. The varieties that are perceived are all used in the service of the nondual Personality of Godhead; one does not become puffed-up or averse to Hari.

Prediction about persons who traverse the ascending path and are faithless to the words of the spiritual master.

The words from the mouth of a bona fide spiritual master are not independent of the sastra. They are completely nourished by and favorable to the sastra. The favorable ascending path that is sometimes accepted to understand the Absolute Truth is simply subservient to the descending process. But whenever the descending path is neglected, the advaya-jnana, or knowledge of the nondual substance, is more or less subdued. Wherever respect for the spiritual master has been diminished, the ascending process, in the form of disobeying the spiritual master, has simply created a perverted mentality of vivarta-vada, or the Mayavada theory of illusion, filled with pride and nourished by the four defects like committing mistakes and being illusioned. This diseased mentality eventually turns into a mine of licentiousness.

Persons who disregard the words of the spiritual master are unable to comprehend the Vedic instructions.

When persons who disregard the spiritual master try to understand the Vedic literatures through their evil attempts, differences of opinion automatically arise in their understanding. But if the sages give up their pride of seminal birth and become fixed in real knowledge by following the descending path, then their recitation of songs from the Sama Veda

will be nondifferent from that of the Rg Veda. Those who are proud of seminal birth and whose bodily conception of life is very prominent are not qualified to hear the instructions of the spiritual master. When the sages subdue their material pride and live in a gurukula to study the Vedas, they are able to comprehend the hearing and studying of the Vedas. Comprehension of the heard subject matters is called smṛti, in other words, to comprehend the subject matter heard in the gurukula through the descending process and act accordingly is execution of the smṛtis.

The smṛtis of Raghunandana, who follows the ascending process, are harmful to the devotees.

The rules and regulations our Raghunandana Bhattacharya has preached as smṛtis for the benefit of the persons traversing the ascending path are not acceptable to the devotees. The worldly, or social, smṛtis may please and bring auspiciousness to people, but they misguide those who traverse the descending path from their goal and cause their downfall. While following the ascending path and its code of conduct, when the smartas, who are expert in smṛti literature, create communities to place impediments on the path of spiritual progress, then devotees consider their attempts as a hindrance to spiritual life.

The difference between smṛtis aiming at material enjoyment and those aiming at service to the Lord.

The smṛtis of the spiritualists and those of the karmis are not the same. The smartas and the devotees see the smṛtis, or conceptions of the Vedas, on various levels. The spiritualists say:

*laukiki vaidiki vapi ya kriya kriyate mune*

*hari-sevanukulaiva sa karya bhaktim icchata*

This means that whatever a traveler on the path of bhakti does is meant for pleasing Lord Hari. And whatever fruitive activities, mental speculation, and sense enjoyment that nondevotee communities devoid of devotion to Hari enact are simply proof of their enjoying spirit in

aversion to Hari. Those who have been permanently qualified in the kingdom of aversion to the Lord are alone incapable of attaching importance to the service of Lord Hari, through worldly or Vedic performances. Such smartas claim a difference of opinion with the travelers on the path of bhakti. There is a gulf of difference between ordinary smrtis and spiritual smrtis.

The spiritual smrtis and worldly smrtis can never be in agreement, they are eternally different.

From the K#OSS material point of view, a strong desire may arise to find a compromise between them; but if an intelligent person carefully considers, he will understand that such an endeavor will create obstacles in worshiping the nondual Personality of Godhead. Generally material knowledge is polluted with four defects—imperfect senses, the propensity for cheating, certainty of committing mistakes, and certainty of being illusioned. The Vedic literatures, however, are beyond these defects. The smrtis that are subordinate to the Vedas are also supposed to be beyond defect. The ordinary materialistic conception is situated in the living entities' field of fruitive activities and awards them a suitable result. The field of the devotees, however, is not the field of fruitive activities that enhances one's material enjoyment. Therefore the Vedic knowledge, or purport of the Vedas, that is heard from the mouth of the spiritual master is not same as the worldly smrtis. Many smartas, who oppose each other, have taken birth in different places at different times. Until a living entity's spiritual perception is awakened, he considers the smartas, who are travelers on the ascending path, as followers of Vedic literatures who are either worldly or devoid of service to Hari; but when he leaves behind the activities at different times and places of smartas whose attempts are always unfavorable for devotional service, he continually follows the spiritual smrtis in the kingdom of devotional service.

The modern so-called Vaisnavas under the subordination of Raghunandana are actually against the Gaudiya Vaisnavas.

Through his own kenius our BenKali RaKhunandana has accumulated certain smrtis and preached them in various places of BenKal. At present

the society of aversion to the service of Hari is being run under the subordination of those teaching. Moreover, many superficial devotees follow Raghunandana's smritis, which are against Vaisnava principles, and thus uproot their spiritual propensities.

Such people desire various forms of material enjoyment in the guise of householders and consider that following smarta Raghunandana Bhattacharya is particular limb of worshiping Hari. Though this spiritual community identifies itself as Gaudiya Vaisnava, members have in no way tried to safeguard the prestige of Sri Hari-bhakti-vilasa, which was compiled under the order of Srīman Mahāprabhu. Whenever they got an opportunity to follow the smarta doctrine, which is opposed to the teachings of Srīman Mahāprabhu, they have readily accepted it. In this way they are accumulating Vaisnava aparādhās, totally uprooting the eternal truth, and permanently obstructing the path of devotional service to Kṛṣṇa.

Raghunandana's oppression towards the Gaudīya Vaisnavas.

Though the position of Raghunandana is very high in the Hindu society of Bengal, in the vision of the devotees such a high position is also situated on the material platform. The harm caused by Raghunandana and his smarta followers in different parts of Bengal at different times is clearly manifested at present in every ritualistic performance. The devotees, however, cannot commit suicide by becoming attracted to the material respect and prestige of the smartas.

Warning to the Gaudīya Vaisnavas.

Therefore the devotees are humbly presenting these topics to the Hindu communities of Bengal and especially to the Gaudīya Vaisnavas. The hearts of the Gaudīya Vaisnavas are certainly shaken by seeing the smartas disturb and harass their desired goal of worship. The Vaisnavas will gradually understand that the pure Vaisnava dharma preached by Srī Gaurasundara is bound by the smartas' ropes, which increase one's aversion to the Lord. O Gaudīya Vaisnavas! Do not relinquish the cultivation of spiritual life, thinking that you will transgress smarta Raghunandana. Be familiar with Raghunandana and take leave of him

forever. (Sajjana-tosani, Vol. 24, Part 5/6)

Smarta and Vaisnava

Mundane fruitive smrtis are casual—their results—the sense enjoyers are worldly smartas.

When a living entity considers his material body and mind as his self and thus engages in various fruitive activities with a desire to enjoy their fruits, then he is called a smarta. The rules and regulations of the smrtis have been composed to regulate those who are not surrendered to the Lord or His devotees but are simply engaged for their own bodily comforts. The rigid instructions of the smrtis are meant to minimize the sinful propensities of those who always speak lies, cheat others, behave improperly, hanker after others possessions, and commit violence to achieve their self-interest. Therefore the injunctions of the smrtis are not eternal, but simply casual, in other words, they have been created for some specific purpose. But the spiritual activities meant for the pleasure of the Lord are eternal, because in such activities the enjoyer is the Supreme Lord, the activities are performed to satisfy Him, and they will eternally do so. Among the twenty-eight subjects dealt with by smarta Raghunandana, subjects such as dayabhaga (inheritance), samskara (purificatory processes), suddhinirnaya (ascertainment of purity), prayascitta (atonement), and sraddha (offering oblations with prasada) are meant for human beings who desire to live one hundred years, and the enjoyers in this case are also those same human beings. There is no mention about the science of self-realization. His mention of worshipping Durga, observing Ekadast, and sacrificing oxen are meant for material enjoyment or attaining liberation. Therefore they are casual.

The devotees follow the primary rule and prohibition.

The Vaisnavas who are fully surrendered to the Lord do not engage in casual activities. They know that the Supreme Lord is the only enjoyer of everything and thus they engage in devotional service to please Him. They know that:

*smartavyah satatam visnur vismartavyo na jatucit*



*sarve vidhi-nisedhah syur etayor eva kinkarah*

Lord Visnu is to be remembered always—this is the only rule, and never forget Visnu—this is the only prohibition. All other rules and prohibitions are based on this primary rule and this primary prohibition. That which by following the Lord is always remembered is a rule, and that which by following the Lord is never forgotten is a prohibition. (from Padma Purana quoted in Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu)

The Vaisnavas serve the Lord with love and devotion.

The Vaisnavas are fully surrendered souls, therefore all their activities are meant to satisfy the Lord. The Vaisnavas are nonenvious and realistic, because they have reestablished their relationship with the Lord. They do not wish to be influential in this world or subdue others; nor do they desire any fame through the performance of various sacrifices, meditation, chanting mantras, undergoing austerities, performing funeral rites, offering oblations, travelling to the holy places, or sacrificing animals in the worship of Durga; nor are they interested in attaining the heavenly planets. Furthermore, they do not desire to enjoy the pleasure of liberation by attaining freedom from the clutches of birth and death. If they can serve their worshipable Lord, they do not mind to take millions of births or even reside in hell. This is their only prayer. Pleasing the Lord is their goal of life.

Exhibition of the abominable mundane considerations of the materialists who are bewildered by the illusory energy.

It is found in Sri mad Bhagavatam that in ancient times there was a debate between the Hari-janas and Prakrti-janas over Ajamila. In this connection, Yamaraja instructed the Prakrti-janas (the Yamadutas) as follows: “What to speak to others, even great personalities like Jaimini and Manu, who have fruitive mentalities, could not properly realize the characteristics of the Hari-janas. Because their intelligence has been contaminated by the flowery language of the Vedas, their power of discrimination has been overwhelmed by Maya. Therefore they glorify the elaborate and opulent ritualistic ceremonies of the smrtis. Because they identify their bodies as their self, according to the logic kamukah pasyanti

kaminl-mayam jagat, or “a very lusty man sees women everywhere,” they even find various faults with the devotional endeavors of the Vaisnavas; they consider the water that has washed the feet of the Vaisnavas as ordinary water; and they even consider that if Lord Narayana (salagrama) is touched by a sudra He should be purified by five purificatory ingredients. In other words, they think that even the Lord is subjected to contamination and can be purified by something like cow dung. They consider that the Vaisnavas belong to a particular caste, they consider maha-prasada as ordinary rice and dal that can be contaminated by the touch, and they consider that if they eat or offer foodstuffs cooked by their disciples they will loose their caste. They eat atapa rice that has not been precooked, takes bath three times a day, walk abnormally on the road in order to avoid stepping on the ants, wear silk dhotis, consider that the Vaisnavas are forced to enjoy the fruits of their karma, consider that if one does not properly follow the demoniac varnasrama system then he will have to face the consequences, consider that religious principles are subordinate to social conventions, and glorify their godless society. Moreover, they consider that all of these activities are devotional service to the Lord.

A surrendered soul is freed from sinful reactions; activities performed with a desire to please the Lord are helpful for achieving pure devotional service.

The Lord has personally stated in Sri Bhagavad-gita, which is the crest jewel of all conclusion, as follows:

*sarva-dharman parityajya mam ekam saranam vraja  
aham tvam sarva-papebhyo moksayisyami ma sucah*

“Give up all varieties of varnas and asramas and take shelter of Me. I will deliver you from all sinful reactions that will be result from not following those activities prescribed for those varnas and asramas.”

He also states in the Third Chapter as follows:

*yajna-sistasinah santo mucyante sarva-kilbisaih  
bhunjate te tv agham papa ye pacanty atma-karanat*

“Those devotees who accept the remnants of the Lord are freed from sinful reactions born from fruitive activities like the five different kinds of :ajna (panca- su5a). And those who claim to be the enjoyers and accumulate ingredients for their own enjoyment, verily eat only sin.”

He further states in Sri Gita as follows:

*yajnarthat karmano 'nyatra loko 'yam karma-bandhanah  
tad-artham karma kaunteya mukta-sangah samacara*

“Activities must be performed for Yajna, or the Supreme Lord Visnu, otherwise they become the cause of bondage.” Activities performed for Visnu are devotional service. They can gradually turn into pure devotional service.

It is mentioned in Narada-pancaratra as follows:

*surarse vihita sastre, harimuddisya ya kriya,  
saiva bhaktiriti prokta, taya bhaktih para bhaved*

“O sage amongst the demigods, Narada, those activities prescribed in the revealed scriptures for satsifying the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Hari, are called the regulative principles of bhakti, (sadhana-bhakti), by practicing which one may attain the highest bhakti (prema).”

*laukiki vaidiki vapi ya kriya kriyate mune*

*hari-sevanukulaiva sa karya bhaktim icchata*

“One should perform only those activities—either worldly or prescribed by Vedic rules and regulations—which are favorable for the cultivation of Krsna consciousness.” Therefore all the activities performed by the devotees for the satisfaction of the Lord do not yield any sinful reactions and they help one in attaining pure devotional service. And since the activities performed by the nondevotee smartas are meant for their own enjoyment, they are simply sinful. Even the activities that are pious according to the smartas are also not totally free from sin. For example, being vegetarian is a pious activity. But when the fruitive workers eat vegetarian food, they also commit violence to living entities. Because fruits and roots are also living entities, if one cuts and eats them he is certainly sinful due to the act of killing. But when a surrendered devotee offers some fruits, roots, or water to Hari with devotion and according to the instructions of the sastras, the Lord gladly accepts them. And when the devotees eat His transcendental remnants, no sinful reaction can touch them.

Without worshiping the Lord even the followers of varnasrama system cannot be freed from sinful reactions.

Statements from the Eleventh Canto of Srimad Bhagavatam are translated by Srila Kaviraja Gosvami Prabhu in His Caitanya-caritamrta as follows:

*cari varnasrami yadi krsna nahi bhaje*

*svakarma karite se raurave padi' maje*

“The followers of the varnasrama institution accept the regulative principles of the four social orders [brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya and sudra] and four spiritual orders [brahmacarya, grhastha, vanaprastha and sannyasa]. However, if one carries out the regulative principles of these orders but does not render transcendental service to Krsna, he falls into the hellish condition of material life.” The reason for this is that other than devotional service all other endeavors are meant for material enjoyment and are therefore sinful. Only devotional service to the Lord is totally freed from sins.

In the service of the Lord, irreligiosity becomes religious.

The Supreme Lord has said:

*man nimittam krtam papam api dharmaya kalpate*

*mam anadrtya dharmo 'pi papam syan mat prabhavatah*

“Committing sins for Me is also considered pious. But if one neglects Me and engages in religious activities, then by My influence these actions turn into sins.” (This verse is from Padma Purana quoted in Bhakti-sandarbha) We will herein cite one example of the behavior of a great personality who was a predecessor acarya in the Ramanuja-sampradaya. Srila Jiva Gosvami has mentioned the following incident in his commentary on Sri mad Bhagavatam. Long ago there was a devotee of Visnu named Tirumangai in South India. From his childhood he traveled to various holy places in order to serve the Lord. In the course of his travels four persons with mystic perfections became his disciples. The name of his first disciple was Tarka-cudamani, his second disciple was Dvara-unmocaka, his third disciple was known as Chayagraha, meaning whoever was touched by his shadow became immobile, and the name of his fourth disciple was Jaloparicara, meaning he could walk on water. While travelling with these four disciples, Tirumangai once came to the temple of Sri Ranganatha. He saw that the temple was almost falling

apart and that the very narrow courtyard was filled with leather shoes. The whole temple was surrounded by bushes. Due to the fear of tigers and jackals, the servants came once a day to worship Sri Ranganatha. Seeing this, Tirumangai Alvar became simultaneously distressed and angry. He began to think, "The materialists are living in gorgeous palaces, surrounded by women and engaged in various lusty affairs, and the Lord of the universe, the king of kings, the life and soul of everyone, is kept in a broken temple with dire negligence. The demons are plundering the wealth of Krsna." But Tirumangai was himself penniless, so he could not decide what to do.

Eventually he and his four disciples began to visit rich people to beg alms. But being proud of their wealth, the rich people rather than giving him charity addressed him as a thief and turned him away. Some of them taunted him saying, "What is the need of money for a sadhu?" But Tirumangai did not budge from his resolve. When he saw that the rich people were plundering the Lord's wealth and enjoying, he resolved to get the Lord's wealth back from the rich thieves and utilize it in the service of the Lord.

Tirumangai and his four disciples became a gang of robbers. His first disciple, Tarka-cudamani, would entangle the materialists in the net of argument, his second disciple, Dvara-unmocaka, would then open the door of the treasury house, his third disciple, Chayagraha, then made everyone motionless, and his fourth disciple, Jaloparicara, entered the palaces that were surrounded by deep moats and plundered all the wealth.

Thereafter, when sufficient wealth was accumulated, Tirumangai brought many expert artists from various provinces and built a beautiful seven-story temple. But Tirumangai himself cooked once a day, and after offering to the Lord he ate the remnants. He was fully surrendered and engaged in the service of the Lord with all his senses. In this way he engaged his disciples in the service of the Lord. He was a self-controlled Gosvami.

Actual examples of serving the spiritual master, serving the Lord, and being humbler than the grass according to the considerations of the devotees or Hari-

janas.

In the vision of a smarta, or moralist, the above-mentioned activities of Tirumangai Alvar are certainly acts of robbery. Tirumangai personally became a leader of thieves and inspired his disciples to perform such activities for the purpose of serving the Lord. In this activity, however, he had no desire at all for personal enjoyment or fame. He realized that all wealth belongs to Narayana, the husband of Laksmi. Rich people are enjoying wealth meant for the Lord's service only due to illusion. Therefore they are actually the plunderers. So when the Lord's wealth could not be recovered through proper channels, then it should be recovered by any means. According to the Hari-janas, or devotees, this plundering act of Tirumangai is devotional service and being humbler than straw in the street. Just as the burning of Lanka by Hanuman is actually devotional service, service to the spiritual master, and being humbler than the grass. The reason is that in these activities there is no tinge of material enjoyment or liberation. And those activities which aim at material enjoyment and liberation, though considered auspicious, are actually impious. The reason is that they were not solely performed for the pleasure of the Lord. Therefore Srimad Bhagavatam (3.23.52) gives the following instruction:

*neha yat karma dharmaya na viragaya kalpate*

*na tirtha-pada-sevayai jivann api mrto hi sah*

“Anyone whose work is not meant to elevate him to religious life, anyone whose religious ritualistic performances do not raise him to renunciation, and anyone situated in renunciation that does not lead him to devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, must be considered dead, although he is breathing.” (Weekly Gaudiya, Vol. 2)

Vaisnava Smṛti

Both karmis and jnanis are materialists, whereas the devotees are spiritualists.

The particular sastras by which the Indian Aryans conduct their ordinary dealings are generally known as smṛti-sastras. The fruitive workers

consider that by following certain rules and regulations their religiosity will be protected. But the mental speculators who desire liberation do not accept those rules and regulations. Rather, the jnanis, according to their taste, become indifferent to material enjoyment and take to the path of renunciation, considering those injunctions as the only appropriate path for themselves. That is why expert fruitive workers call themselves materialists, and the renounced impersonalists identify themselves as spiritualists. But knowing the jnanis' desire for enjoying the fruits of their activities, the devotees, who are transcendental to karma and jnana, consider both karmis and jnanis as materialists and address the Santa Vaisnavas as spiritualists.

All actions performed with a desire for enjoying the results, up to liberation, are under the category of fruitive activities. Therefore they are simply mundane endeavors for one's self-interest.

The smṛti regulations of the transcendental devotees are not the same as those of the materialists like the karmis and jnanis.

All the endeavors of the devotees are meant for Kṛṣṇa. Since the devotees do not have material desires like the inferior karmis and jnanis, their endeavors are not like those of the karmis and jnanis. The injunctions of the smṛtis meant for regulating the materialists are not intended for the spiritualists. So we can say that there are differences between the regulative principles of the nondevotees and those of the devotees. The materialists, who want to enjoy the fruits of their karma and the devotees whose material desires are burnt to ashes are never on the same platform. The regulations of the nondevotees are meant for their own benefit, whereas the regulations of the devotees are meant for serving Kṛṣṇa. The purpose of the former is to achieve the results of their mundane realizations, and the later is to serve the transcendental Lord.

The Vaisnavas accept the injunctions of Harita-smṛti and those supported by the Puranas.

Among the twenty Dharma-sastras, the injunctions of Harita are applicable to the Vaisnavas. Apart from the twenty Dharma-sastras, the regulations of the Puranas are also accepted by the smartas. The



Vaisnavas also accept necessary injunctions from the Puranas and Vedas. In this country and abroad some ordinary smartas of the Medieval Age have written a few books about smṛti injunctions. The Vaisnavas have collected various evidence from the sastras for the benefit of their respective sampradāyas and have written down those rules and regulations for the benefit of the Vaisnavas.

Sri Hari-bhakti-vilasa, twenty-eight principles, and other smṛtis.

Under the order of Srīman Mahāprabhu, Srī Sanātana Gosvāmī, following the pure sastras, compiled Sri Hari-bhakti-vilasa for the benefit of the Vaisnavas of Bengal. This Hari-bhakti-vilasa was edited by Srī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī. Approximately fifty years after this, Srī Rāghunānanda Bhaṭṭācārya of Bāṇḍyāghaṭa (Bengal) wrote a few essays called Asta-vimsati-tattva for use in the smartas' mundane dealings. In these essays he has established different opinions from the injunctions of Hari-bhakti-vilasa. It is also found that various smṛti books were composed in various parts of India for their respective use.

Although the principle ingredients of smṛtis are the same, considerations differ due to desires for either serving Kṛṣṇa or material enjoyment.

The question may now arise in the minds of many people that when the main foundation of the smṛti writers is one, then why are the conclusive regulations different? In answer to this, we can say that the writers of the Vaisnava smṛtis are servants of the Lord whereas the writers of the smṛtis meant for persons attached to material enjoyment are sense gratifiers. The materialists have no taste or faith in the worship of the Lord. Therefore it is impossible to get impartial regulations from such persons.

By following the smṛta system one cannot become a Vaisnava.

Although the Hindu communities are forced to follow the regulations of ordinary smartas, the pure devotees who also belong to Hindu communities are not obliged to follow the smṛtis of the materialists. In the society of devotees it is not possible to follow the Vaisnava smṛtis and at the same time respect the smṛta regulations. That would be simply a sign of weakness and foolishness. When due to the influence of their

knowledge the devotee householders will come to understand their own literatures and prestige, then they will no longer be dependent on others. The devotees should lead their lives in Krsna's family according to the Vaisnava smrtis. Then the godless smartas will never be able to dominate them.

Instructions for the present Vaisnava societies.

If the Vaisnava devotees spend their lives following the instructions of the spiritual master, then there will be no possibility of disturbances in this world. Sometimes the ordinary smartas glance menacingly towards devotional service to Visnu and thus prove their foolishness, but such narrow mentality can never prove them to be magnanimous. At present it is the age of Kali, so the pure considerations of the Vaisnavas are being included among the useless arguments of the mental speculators. These are all indications of apathy towards the Absolute Truth. It does not befit a great Vaisnava to accept subordination of the smartas who lack transcendental realization and who are influential by material standards. They should thoroughly follow the Vaisnava smrtis—this is our special request. (Sajjana-tosani, Vol. 18, Part 2)

Vaisnava and other smrtis

The two types of smrtis such as Vaisnava and non-Vaisnava. The consideration on non-Vaisnava smrtis.

A smrti-sastra is that which contains various rules and regulations of the religious scriptures (Dharma-sastras) and which is meant to regulate the living entities' ordinary dealings. The smrti sastras are of two types—those meant for devotees and those meant for nondevotees. Without accepting transcendental consideration, the nondevotee smartas have accumulated many nondevotional rules and regulations from the smrtis to protect mundane social discipline and have thus established a godless society. In such a godless society, only those who are inclined towards the Supreme Lord do not follow the instructions and regulations of the smartas. Although the number of persons who are averse to the devotional service of the Lord is greater, they are unable to extend their authority upon the persons who are inclined towards God. The ordinary

smartas declare that if one simply follows the lifeless regulations of the sastras without accepting devotional service, he can be famous as a pious person. But the devotees cannot agree with such persons.

The opinion of Smarta Raghunandana and Sri Hari-bhakti-vilasa.

According to the propensities of people, different codes of conduct are found in the same sastra. Sri Raghunandana and other smartas, who are expert in worldly dealings, have mentioned in their various essays about the separate arrangements for the Vaisnavas. And spiritualist smartas have concluded that the nondevotional statements of smrtis quoted in Sri Hari-bhakti-vilasa are not meant to be followed by the Vaisnavas.

The prominence of non-Vaisnava smrtis is due to aversion to the Lord.

Since the current of godlessness is very prominent in society, there is often no respect for Vaisnava smrtis. The consideration, "Because the Vaisnava smrtis are not always respected, they have no utility in the society," befits a foolish society.

When people consider themselves nondevotees and averse to the Lord, then their position in godless society becomes firmly established. They also think that they cannot escape from the fierce attack of the nondevotee smartas. Being initiated by a Vaisnava acarya yet continuing to lick the feet of smartas such as Raghunandana becomes a family tradition for such a person. But actually this is the result of his forgetfulness of the self.

Initiated Vaisnavas should study the Vaisnava smrtis.

When the initiated Vaisnava will observe that the behavior of the uninitiated godless society is averse to spiritual life and when he feels the necessity of requesting the nondevotees to turn towards Krsna, then his study of Vaisnava smrtis will begin. Until one advances in the spiritual path, he will continue to regard following the ordinary smrtis as following religious principles. But if he is determined to follow in the footsteps of the spiritual master, then such a benefactor of society will learn to respect the Vaisnava smrtis.

Even many Gaudiya Vaisnavas do not respect Sri Hari-bhakti-vilasa.

Alas, what a sorrowful condition! Today in Gaudiya Vaisnava society, the respect for the Vaisnava smrti written by Sri Sanatana Gosvami and instructed by Sriman Mahaprabhu is no longer present! Though we identify ourselves as servants of the Vaisnavas, we disgrace our line by uprooting the practice of Vaisnava smrtis! And we consider those who are trying to revive the practice of Vaisnava smrtis as enemies!

The antiquity of Sri Gopala Bhatta Gosvami's Sat-kriya-sara-dipika and its propagation by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura.

The book, Sat-kriya-sara-dipika, written by Srila Gopala Bhatta Gosvami according to Vedic process, existed in the Gaudiya Vaisnava society one hundred years prior to the period of smarta Raghunandana. But so far, due to the lack of acaryas, this book was locked in a box and thus unknown among the Vaisnavas. The need of the pure devotees that Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura fulfilled by preaching this book among the Vaisnavas by the will of Sri Gaurasundara, the pure Gaudiya Vaisnava society will take a thousand years to repay this debt. And if Sri Gaurasundara desires, then Gaudiya Vaisnavas can unanimously adopt the principles of this Vaisnava smrti in order to protect their purity.

Instructions to the devotees of Sri Gaura and their followers to chant the holy names of the Lord while remaining in pure varnasrama.

When Sri Sri Gaurasundara appeared in this world, at that time the Hindu society of Bengal was in a most miserable condition. Because He introduced spiritualism and chanting of the holy names of Hari, the godless society of that time did not refrain from opposing Him. Sri Gauranga's devotees and their followers should at present remain properly situated in varnasrama and continue to chant the holy names of Lord Hari.

If the godlessness of the smartas is neglected, then the practice of Vaisnava smrtis will be introduced.

If the activities of society are not related to Hari, then the living entities

will be absorbed in matter due to their propensity of aversion to Hari born of anarthas. If in every activity of society aversion to Hari is rejected and service to Hari is accepted, and if pure varnasrama-dharma is widely reestablished, then we will soon be delighted to see respect for the Vaisnava smrtis.

One who is externally a devotee of Hari but internally a smarta can never become an unalloyed Vaisnava.

If we consider ourselves devotees of Hari while maintaining godlessness in all our activities and respecting ordinary smrtis within our hearts, then we will never be established as nonduplicitous servants of the Vaisnavas. Unless we become genuine Vaisnavas we will not receive the Lord's mercy and pure varnasrama principles will not be established. The pure swanlike Vaisnava principles, which are beyond the varnasrama system, can never be practiced within the impure varnasrama system—this is a subject of consideration for learned people.

Equal behavior internally and externally.

“Be fixed-up internally while externally carrying out ordinary dealings.” One should not distort the real meaning of this sentence to maintain faith in impure varnasrama principles within. For the benefit of those who have taken shelter of devotional service to the Lord without duplicity, Sri Rupapada has quoted the following Narada-pancaratra verse in Sri Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu:

*laukiki vaidiki vapi ya kriya kriyate mune*

*hari-sevanukulaiva sa karya bhaktim icchata*

Those who wish to pass their lives in a way that is favorable for the cultivation of devotional service should perform all those worldly and Vedic activities that are favorable for their own service to Hari. Whatever arrangements they establish in this world should not be contrary to the internal faith of the Vaisnavas.

Since the caste Gosvamis and their disciples are not established in pure varnasrama principles, they lack Vaisnava qualities.

If we saw today that the acaryas and their followers in the Gaudiya Vaisnava societies were established in pure varnasrama principles that are favorable for devotional service, then there would be no disturbance in the internal faith of the devotees of the Lord. The Vaisnavas who are internally fixed in truth feel great distress on seeing the behavior of godless society, and they are ready to disclose this outrageous behavior to the public. If the Vaisnavas were not fixed in their goal, then they would not assert that both ordinary dealings and worship of the Lord should be favorable to the society. If one's heart is not fixed, or if one has a lack of determination for the lotus feet of Visnu or the Vaisnavas, then abominable external conceptions will not allow one to be fixed in Krsna consciousness.

Due to misinterpretation of the scriptures by so-called acaryas, the path of bhakti has become full of thorns.

Taking advantage of Duryodhana's statement in Mahabharata: yatha nijukto 'smi tatha karomi—"I will do whatever activities you will engage me in," many nondevotees are proceeding on the path of sinful activities. Taking advantage of the Bhagavad-gita verse: api cet su-duracarah—"Even if one commits the most abominable actions," hundreds of so-called Vaisnavas are becoming utterly confused on the path of hell. Forgetting the real purport of the verse yad yad acarati sresthas—"Whatever action a great man performs," many so-called acaryas like us are spreading thorns on the path of devotional service to the Lord. Since ordinary living entities are habituated to misbehavior, such acaryas proudly and duplicitously advertise themselves as internally fixed in truth while in fact they indulge in so many unfavorable activities.

Confusions in the name of raganuga-bhakti.

Confusion in the name of raganuga-bhakti has become a standard practice, and deviated societies are affected by this, thus revealing their respective internal faith. It is our humble request that the Vaisnavas should carefully discuss these topics and proceed on the path of devotional service by following the Vaisnava smrtis. They will not benefit by attacking us unnecessarily. They should be compassionate to the body and mind and consider our humble statements. (Sajjana-tosanl,

Vol.23, Part 4)

The initiated

Three types of birth—saukra, savitra, and daiksa.

Three types of birth are described in Sri Bhargaviya Manu-samhita and in the Sri mad Bhagavatam. They are also described in various branches of Vedic literatures. The Vedic sandarbhas also confirm this.

Saukra, savitra, and daiksa—these three births are explained in the Vedas. When one is born from a legitimate father and mother it is called saukra-janma, or seminal birth, when one receives the Gayatri mantra from the acarya it is called savitra-janma, or Vedic birth of receiving Gayatri, and when one receives initiation through fire sacrifice it is called daiksa-janma, or spiritual initiation birth. The seminal birth is the original, and there is no consideration of reformatory processes in this. The sudras are also not meant for undergoing purificatory processes. Except the sudras, everyone else undergoes purificatory process in the form of accepting Gayatri mantras from the acarya and studying the Vedas in gurukula—this is their savitra-janma, or birth in the form of receiving Gayatri. When these people take spiritual initiation in order to achieve competence in the performance of sacrifices, they became known as thrice-born. Persons other than sudras become twice-born in their second birth and thrice-born in their third birth. Only qualified brahmanas are eligible for third birth, or spiritual initiation.

Ascertainment of time for the three births; what is vratya?

There is no third birth for the ksatriyas and vaisyas. Someone born in brahmana family can be a twice-born, but if he surpasses sixteen years of age without

undergoing the purificatory process of receiving Gayatri mantras, then instead of being a twice-born he becomes known as a vratya. If he undergoes the twice-born samskara at the age of twenty, then he will be known as a ksatriya, and if he undergoes the samskara at the age of twenty-two, he will be known as a vaisya. Beyond that, he no longer

eligible for being a twice-born and hence becomes known as a vratyā.

Religious principles decline in proportion to the influence of the yugas; there is a lack of the three Vedic births in this age of Kali.

From Satya-yuga to Dvapara-yuga, the Vedic administration progressively diminished. At the arrival of Kali-yuga, the three legs of religious principles had diminished, and since the fourth leg is under attack, the Vedic ceremonies are present only in name. That is why animal sacrifices were reduced in Dvapara-yuga, and Deity worship was introduced in its place. On the introduction of the sacrifice of chanting the holy names of the Lord in Kali-yuga, the karma-kanda sacrifices and Deity worship can no longer be performed properly. Though in this age of Kali the process of being twice-born by external purificatory rites is still current, there is no possibility for such persons to become Vedic thrice-born.

Sacrifice of chanting the holy names is the qualification for performing sacrifices

in this age of Kali.

Persons who are qualified to perform the sacrifice of chanting the holy names actually do so after being initiated. The maha-bhagavatas are most qualified for performing hari-nama-yajna. In order to be qualified for hari-nama-yajna, the kanistha-adhikarīs take initiation from a maha-bhagavata with a desire to achieve the primary qualification. When a conditioned soul takes initiation from a maha-bhagavata, he understands his eternal relationship with the Lord.

A liberated soul is initiated in the sacrifice of chanting the holy names of the Lord and is therefore a topmost brahmana.

A liberated soul is initiated into the chanting of the holy names. A liberated soul refers to a maha-bhagavata who is beyond the principles of varnasrama and who is the best of the brahmanas. Sri Haridasa Thakura is the ideal and prime example. A maha-bhagavata is the best of the brahmanas and a Vaisnava. He is capable of giving initiation to others.



The chanting of mantras by a kanistha-adhikari does not qualify him to be liberated from material existence. Whenever he attains perfection in chanting the holy names by giving up his pride for his materially conditioned life, then he immediately becomes qualified to chant Lord Hari's holy names, which are worshipable by the liberated souls.

Vedic ceremonies are not successful in Kali-yuga; the position of the brahmanas in Kali-yuga.

The Vedic ritualistic ceremonies are not totally successful in this age of Kali. In Kali-yuga, which is full of contamination, those who are proud of being brahmanas but act like sudras are intoxicated for worshiping everything except the Absolute Truth. Although they are supposed to be knowers of the Supreme Brahman, due to

their past misdeeds, rather than worshiping Lord Visnu they engage in worshiping five demigods. They neglect the supreme position of Lord Visnu and consider Him equal to the demigods. That is why such persons are disqualified from performing Vedic sacrifices in the form of worshiping Visnu, the master of all sacrifices.

Introduction to Vaisnava smrtis, or Vaisnava code of conduct, and their propagation.

The Vedic ritualistic ceremonies described in the Vaisnava tantras according to Vedic injunctions are known as Pancaratras, or expansions of the Vedas. This is accepted by sages who follow the Vedic path. Under the instruction of Sri Gaurasundara, Sri Sanatana Gosvami, the Gaudiya Vaisnava acarya, compiled the Vaisnava smrti called Sri Hari-bhakti-vilasa. Sri Gopala Bhatta Gosvami, an ideal mahapurusa, expert in Vaisnava etiquette, worshipable for the kanistha-adhikaris, and one of the six Gosvamis, wrote Sat-kriya-sara-dipika and edited Sri Hari-bhakti-vilasa, following in the footsteps of Sri Sanatana Gosvami. Although the rituals in the Vaisnava smrtis of the Gaudiya Vaisnavas have been more or less attacked by the smartas, who are averse to the Lord, the day has come for propagating the Vaisnava rituals.

Every human being had a right for pancaratrika initiation, whereby their position

at twice-born is guaranteed.

We can know from the scriptural evidences quoted in Sri Hari-bhakti-vilasa that all sudra and non-sudra human beings, though not eligible for savitra, or Vedic initiation, are certainly eligible for pancaratrika initiation. Whether one has resided in gurukula after accepting Vedic initiation or not, whether a brahmana has fallen from his religious vows or not, or whether one is born in a sudra or lower than a sudra family—through pious activities, all can become eligible for receiving pancaratrika initiation. If any human being receives pancaratrika initiation, he is certainly a twice-born. Though women do not undergo the sacred thread ceremony, they also become twice-born and are thus qualified to chant the holy names and worship the Deities. It is to be understood that persons who are not invested with the sacred thread have not received actual initiation. The qualification of paramahamsa, however, has no symptoms of varnas, such as sacred thread, and no symptoms of asrama, such as the danda or saffron robes. They do not engage in Deity worship like those who are situated in varnasrama. The scriptures say that as a bell metal mixed with mercury in a specific way turns into gold, when a person takes pancaratrika initiation from a bona fide spiritual master, he certainly becomes a twice-born brahmana.

The seminal brahmanas attain the position of sudras in this age of Kali.

Contrary to their brahminical principles, many twice-born persons in Kali-yuga worship five gods and neglect Lord Visnu. They then fall from their position as brahmanas and became sudras or outcastes. What to speak of qualifying for third birth, they ascertain that the behavior of sudras and outcastes is brahminical. In the last two or three hundred years the behavior of sudras and outcastes has been introduced among the Gaudiya Vaisnavas in the name of paramahamsa Vaisnava behavior. They actually follow the materialistic smartas and give sudra initiation.

In this way they have caused great damage to the Vedic Vaisnava religion, and by taking the role of an unqualified spiritual master, they simply increase their attachment to their stomach and genitals. Instead of giving proper pancaratrika initiation to their disciples, such people turn them into monkeys instead of making them like Siva, turn them away

from Visnu instead of making them Vaisnavas, and allow them to indulge in the principles of varnasrama that are based on mundane association with women.

The current of seminal consideration is checked in the line of Rasikananda Prabhu.

Had a bona fide spiritual master actually given pancaratika initiation to any disciple, he would not have destroyed his spiritual life by becoming puffed up by his seminal birth. Such persons would not have degraded themselves by posing as spiritual masters. Since these considerations are prominently accepted in the line of Rasikananda Prabhu, the characteristics of pure religion preached by Sriman Mahaprabhu and the six Gosvamis are beautifully protected therein.

The initiation of social brahmanas is not spiritual— it is a familial act and therefore must be rejected.

If the food and water of an initiated person is treated equally with the food and water of an uninitiated person (a brahmana), then intelligent people should impartially consider what injustice and outrage have been encouraged in the name of spiritualism. Our question is that if a person remains a sudra even after his initiation, then in which varna does his spiritual master belong? If he was not fallen, or did not give initiation, or gave sudra initiation, then why should he be called a spiritual master? Why is such a guru called a spiritual master instead of a purohita, or family priest? The activities of protecting one's seminal dynasty and properly regulating society that are going on at present in the name of religion are actually the duties of a priest. They are not meant for delivering the fallen souls. A spiritualist should treat such so-called gurus as priests and take initiation from a Vaisnava guru in order to become a Vaisnava. If, while considering them priests, family gurus are given something to maintain their livelihood, then one's spiritual activities will go on without disturbance. Every Gaudiya Vaisnava should carefully consider how to restrain the professional mantra sellers, chanters, drum players, Bhagavatam reciters, and Deity worshipers from troubling the Gaudiya Vaisnava society with financial pressure.

If an initiated person has not undergone the sacred thread ceremony, he is not qualified to be a guru; rather he is fit for rejection.

If an initiated person has not undergone the sacred thread ceremony, then according to the statement of Brhaspati, a compiler of Dharma-sastras, he has simply transgressed religious principles. The scriptures state that after receiving initiation one becomes a twice-born. If this was not so, then it is to be concluded that he has certainly not been properly initiated. If one is properly initiated, then the results must come. The cause is known by its effects. If one claims to be a Vaisnava guru while neglecting the *tat tenaiva vinirdiset*—“he should be accepted according to those symptoms of classification” statement of Sri mad Bhagavatam(7.11.35), then he should be rejected. This is the purport of the scriptures.

*guror apy avaliptasya karyakaryam ajanatah*

*utpatha-pratipannasya parityago vidhiyate*

“One who assumes the dress and position of an acarya, who speaks against the conclusions of Sri mad Bhagavatam and other scriptures, or who performs kirtana opposed to the proper glorification of Sri Krsna certainly goes to hell for countless lifetimes along with his disciples and whoever else hears such nondevotional talks and kirtanas.

According to these statements of the sastras one should give up disguised enemies. If one does not give up such so-called gurus, then the prestige of Gaudiya Vaisnava religion will not remain intact and the living entities' path of worship will be full of thorns.

Nondevotees are neither gurus nor brahmanas.

One should not accept a non-Vaisnava spiritual master. The evidence of the sastra in this regard is as follows:

*mahakula prasuto 'pi sarva yajnesu dlksitah*

*sahasrasakhadhyayi ca na guruh syad avaisnavah*

*mahabhagavata srestho brahmano vai gurur nrnam*

*sarvesam eva lokanam asau pujyo yatha harih*

“A non-Vaisnava is never fit to be guru even if he has taken birth in a great family, performed all sacrifices, and studied many branches of the Vedas. Among all human beings the brahmana who is a mahabhagavata, or great devotee, is topmost and qualified as guru. He is as worshipable as Lord Hari.”

Therefore a nondevotee cannot become a brahmana or a spiritual master. The evil-minded person who proudly considers himself a spiritual master of the Vaisnavas cannot be accepted as a spiritual master. One who considers himself a brahmana and servant of the Vaisnavas knows that there is no possibility of becoming a brahmana without being a servant of the Vaisnavas; he is a real brahmana and a bona fide guru. A person who is proud of being a servant of the Vaisnavas should take pancaratika initiation from such a spiritual master. After being duly initiated he will attain the position of a brahmana. He will properly follow the rules and regulations, such as the sacred thread ceremony, and in this way he will become well-behaved and humble. Otherwise, birth after birth it will never be possible to become servant of the Vaisnavas.

Those who do not accept that “only through initiation one becomes twice-born” are to be rejected by society.

According to the instruction of Sri Gaurasundara, Sri Sanatana Gosvami has written as follows:

*grhita-visnu-diksako visnu-pujaparo narah*

*vaisnavo 'bhihito 'bhijna iritaro 'smadavaishnavah*

“One who is initiated into the Vaisnava mantra and who is devoted to worshiping Lord Visnu is a Vaisnava. One who is devoid of these practices is not a Vaisnava.” One who is recognized as a Vaisnava by other Vaisnavas should take initiation into Visnu mantra from a spiritual master. On the strength of initiation, he should accept the reformatory

ceremonies of a twice-born. A qualified brahmana is eligible for worshiping Visnu. He can then serve his spiritual master, who is a manifestation of Visnu, with water and cooked foodstuffs. At that point society cannot put impediments on his path of spiritual life. If at all they do so, then one should give up such a hated society, considering it unfavorable. Every Gaudtya Vaisnava should accept the society that is favorable for devotional service to Hari. One should not live in a society that is averse to spiritual life. It is stated in Srimad Bhagavatam (5.5.18):

*gurur na sa syat sva-jano na sa syat*

*pita na sa syaj janani na sa syat*

*daivam na tat syan na patis ca sa syan*

*na mocayed yah samupeta-mrtyum*

“One who cannot deliver his dependents from the path of repeated birth and death should never become a spiritual master, a father, a husband, a mother or a worshipable demigod.”

After the disappearance of Sriman Mahaprabhu, Vaisnava society fell under the subordination of smartas.

Every Gaudtya Vaisnava should consider whether it is proper for a person to disassociate oneself from spiritual life while keeping faith in insignificant matter. One's relationship of sense gratification and maintaining godless interests in this world is for up to one hundred years, whereas spiritual life without material desires and with love of Hari is for eternal life. After the disappearance of Srt Caitanyadeva and His six Gosvamt associates, the confusion and licking the feet of smartas that goes on in the name of Srt Gaudtya Vaisnava society is simply a corruption of Vaisnava religion. In order to stop this corruption, Srt Gaurasundara has sent His own associates from time to time. So why are we not following those Vaisnava smartas, who are mahajanas conversant with spiritual knowledge, and thereby being misguided? Why are we turning away from scriptural knowledge and falling in the jugglery

of the selfish nondevotees, thus wasting our valuable lives in aversion to Hari? Will godless society remain prominent forever? Will the beneficial words of the devotees, the subtle purport of the sastras, and the impartiality of the compilers of the sastras be neglected forever? Will the glories of Sri Hari-bhakti-vilasa ever remain fallen in the dark pit of the godless smartas?

Instruction to follow Sat-kriya-sara-dipika of Gopala Bhatta Gosvami.

Will Bhavadeva's guidelines cover the Sat-kriya-sara-dipika forever? Raghunandana's Samskara-tattva has been permanently covered. It has never been opened up. So why will Sat-kriya-sara-dipika be disregarded? We are humbly appealing to the Gaudya Vaisnavas who are conversant with the sastras to open their eyes and follow the previous acaryas. May they carefully discuss the Mahabharata verse sudro 'py agama-sampanno dvijo bhavati samskrtah—"even a sudra can be purified though carefully following the proper conduct of a brahmana as prescribed in the Pancaratra" and the Sri mad Bhagavatam verse yad anyatrapi drsyeta tat tenaiva vinirdiset—"if the qualities of one group are found in the men of another, those men should be recognized by their qualities, by their symptoms" and be freed from the shackles of the Hindu society that is averse to Visnu. Then they will be freed from material enjoyment, and only then they will be able to worship the Deities and chant the holy names of Hari.

Assurance of reestablishment of Vaisnava smrti.

"Those who are initiated cannot be brahmanas," and "only by being born in a brahmana family does one become a brahmana"—These misconceptions have created a great deal of disturbance and caused the degradation of religious principles. These misconceptions must be eradicated. Once Tridandi Sannyasi Sri Ramanuja Svami of South India, who was an incarnation of Sri Nityananda Prabhu, delivered the Vaisnavas of this world from the clutches of the worshipers of five gods. Today by the endeavors of the weak servants of the Vaisnavas like us, the religious principles of the scriptures will be again established in Aryavarta. We are taking shelter of Sri Guru and Gauranga in order to deliver the Gaudiya Vaisnava society from the clutches of the envious, pseudo Vaisnavas

such as aula, baula, prakṛta-sahajīya, neda, daravesa, sani, gaura-nagarī, seminal Gosvamis, and pseudo renunciates. Please come, O brothers! Be spiritualists, give up the conception of prakṛta-sahajīya; let us sing, following in the footsteps of Śrīla Thakura Bhaktivinoda, who is the root inaugurator of the pure devotional current.

*'ami to vaiṣṇava', e buddhi hoile, amani na ho'bo ami*

*pratisthasa asi', hṛdoya duṣibe, hoibo niraya-gami*

*tomara kinkora, apāne janibo, 'guru'-abhimana tyaji'*

*tomara ucchiṣṭha, pada-jala-ṛenu, sada niskapate bhaji*

*'nīje srestha' jani, ucchiṣṭhadi dane, ho'be abhimana bhara*

*tai sisya taba, thakiya sarvada, na loibo puja ka'ra*

*amani manada, hoile kirtane, adhikara dibe tumi*

*tomara carane, niskapate ami, kandiya lutibo bhumi*

“If I consider that I am a Vaiṣṇava, then I will not be modest. Then the desire for name and fame will pollute my heart, and I will thus go to hell. I will consider myself your servant and give up the pride of being a spiritual master. I will accept remnants and the water that has washed the feet of a Vaiṣṇava without duplicity. If I think I am the best and thus give remnants to others, then I will simply become proud. Therefore I will always remain your disciple, and I will not accept worship from anyone. If I do not desire respect for myself but give respect to others, then you will give me the right to chant the holy names. I will fall down at your feet without duplicity and cry while rolling on the ground.”

Vaiṣṇavas are automatically brahmanas as well as transcendental to the modes of material nature. The mundane fruitive workers consider that their Vedic branch is different than the Vedic branch of the ācāryas in disciplic succession.



The Vedic branch that the acaryas of the disciplic succession from Lord Brahma have accepted appears different to the fruitive workers, because due to their narrow-mindedness they find it unfavorable to their own Vedic branch. In the Eleventh Canto of Sri mad Bhagavatam these topics are properly described. We will elaborate on those points at the appropriate place, so we are not bringing up those innumerable topics here.

Without undergoing sacred thread ceremony it is impossible to become a twice-born.

Regarding samskaras, it is written in the Dharma-sastra of Yajnavalkya that all one's sins are eradicated by undergoing purificatory processes. The sudras are simply sinful, therefore there are no samskaras<sup>9</sup>prescribed for them. It is not a fact that just because one is born in a sinful family he will not be able to hear Sri mad Bhagavatam or worship the Supreme Lord. According to the sarvesam mad- upasanam —“worship of Me is to be practiced by all human beings” verse of Eleventh Canto and yasya yal laksanam proktam—“if one shows the described symptoms” verse of Seventh Canto of Sri mad Bhagavatam and innumerable other similar statements, it is confirmed that everyone has a right to be freed from sinful reactions and worship the Lord. That is why Acarya Sri Jiva Gosvami has stated in his Durgama-sangamanl commentary on Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu that until one undergoes all the limbs of the initiation process, he does not become a twice-born brahmana. In order to become twice-born, the sages underwent savitrya-samskara. Similarly, unless an initiated person undergoes the savitrya-samskara, he will not be accepted as a brahmana in the worldly society.

Sinless Sri Suuta Gosvami achieved everything under the shelter of paramahamsa Sri Sukadeva.

According to the statements of the sages headed by Saunaka, Sri Suta Gosvami has been established as sinless. It is understood that he was not born in a sinful or outcaste family. But the fruitive workers who follow an incomplete portion of a branch of Vedic literature consider him a non-brahmana outcaste and devoid of any samskaras. Thus they neglect the spiritual master and commit offence. That is why Sri Vyasadeva has

recorded the word anagha, or sinless, spoken by the sages while describing Sri Suta Gosvami in order to set an example for his successor acaryas. Sri Suta Gosvami gave up his identification with a lower family and took shelter of Sri Sukadeva Gosvami. Because of accepting subordination to the spiritual master he became qualified to hear Srimad Bhagavatam:

*jnane prayasam udapasya namanta eva*

*jlvanti san-mukharitam bhavadlya-vartam*

*sthane sthitah sruti-gatam tanu-van-manobhir*

*ye prayaso 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyam*

“Those who, even while remaining situated in their established social positions, throw away the process of speculative knowledge and with their body, words and mind offer all respects to descriptions of Your personality and activities, dedicating their lives to these narrations, which are vibrated by You personally and by Your pure devotees, certainly conquer Your Lordship, although You are otherwise unconquerable by anyone within the three worlds.”

After hearing this sloka from Sri Sukadeva, Sri Suta Gosvami Maharaja, though born in a low class family, heard Sri mad Bhagavatam with his body, mind, and speech from paramahamsa Sri Sukadeva, the king of the Vaisnavas. Thus he underwent all types of samskaras and ultimately accepted the external dress meant for paramahamsas and approved by Sri mad Bhagavatam. Unable to find any symptoms in his external dress that he had undergone any samskaras, the sages, who were mental speculators and controlled by the illusory energy, through their worldly godless vision simply understood him as a non-brahmana, professional outcaste saint. But Sarasvati Devi inspired them to address him as sinless and professor of the Dharma%sastras. Since foolishness is an impediment on the path of good fortune to the world, it is not encouraged by Krsna, who is beyond the jurisdiction of sense perception, because a gentle favored disciple receives all confidential mysteries from his spiritual master.

The real meaning of the word *ayusman*, or “O immortal one,” spoken by the sages headed by Saunaka.

Since the sages headed by Saunaka accepted Sri Suta Gosvami as their spiritual master, the sages prayed to Suta Gosvami to instruct them in the knowledge attained by gentle obedient disciples that he had received. Many so-called spiritual masters, instead of desiring welfare for their disciples, hate them in order to fulfill their own material desires. Such so-called spiritual masters do not know what is beneficial for themselves, rather they accept something inauspicious as auspicious. The sages did not address Sri Suta Gosvami as *ayusman*, or “O immortal one,” merely out of affection. The word *ayusman* spoken by the sages is an expression of gratitude or appreciation of an experienced spiritual master by the ignorant people. Suta Gosvami simply repeated the message he had heard from his spiritual master to his disciples, and therefore he was addressed as *ayusman*.

Sri Vyasadeva, Sri Sukadeva, and others are spiritual masters of the entire world; they are free from illusion and liberated souls.

According to the injunction *na prakrtatvam iha bhakta janasya pasyet*—“a devotee should not be seen from a materialistic point of view,” the disciplic succession from Vyasadeva does not consider that spiritual masters are burnt in the blazing fire of material existence. The nature of the material world is that whether one's son is honest or dishonest, everyone should give up the worship of Hari, cry out “O my son!” and forget Kṛṣṇa. But the similar expression displayed by Vyasa is simply to increase the ignorance of the mundane fruitive workers and bewilder them. Actually Sukadeva was a great Vaisnava and a renounced paramahansa. Remaining aloof from his association is not acceptable to Vyasa and his descendants. In order to convince the materialists of this fact, such a pastime was enacted by Sri Vyasadeva. The pastimes of Sri Sanatana Gosvami suffering pain from boils and Sri Kṛṣṇacandra being hit by the arrow of a hunter named Uddhava were both enacted to increase the illusion of ignorant people. It is to be understood that the propagation of Mayavada philosophy by Sri Mahadeva and the propagation through Manu of social religious scriptures by Lord Brahma were both meant for bewildering unqualified people. Sri Sukadeva was

an ideal personality and spiritual master of the entire world. As soon as he completed his study with Vyasadeva, he set out to bestow mercy on all living entities. From the external point of view the return of paramahansa Sri Sukadeva to the royal assembly of Pariksit and his association with Suta Gosvami may create apparent contradictions, but according to the considerations of paramahansas, these were pure standards of behavior. One who does not accept this commits an offence at the feet of the spiritual master.

The misunderstandings of conditioned fruitive workers regarding the paramahansa spiritual master.

Since the mood of paramahansa awakened in the hearts of all living entities, even the trees placed Sri Sukadeva in their hearts. He remained in the hearts of the trees like the indwelling Supersoul. The whole world serves the jagad-guru. The father's call to his Vaisnava son and the feelings of separation from the association of a Vaisnava were reciprocated by mental agitation in every Vaisnava heart, including the trees. This is indicative of hearing and chanting from a spiritual master. Following Vyasadeva's ideal character and being controlled by devotional service in the form of chanting, the trees of the forest under the shelter of Sri Vyasa also worshiped the Vaisnava. Those whose bondage in fruitive activities has not been untied wrongly conclude that the Vaisnavas are also subjected to birth and the bondage of karma. Therefore in order to nourish their mood of ignorance, Vyasadeva exemplified the bondage of material existence. As a result, attached householders foolishly misunderstand his lamentation for his son as a religious principle. But the descendants of Sri Vyasadeva understand that separation from a Vaisnava is extremely painful. If one does not take shelter of such a paramahansa Vaisnava, he will never be relieved from the pain of material existence.

One Caste

The history of hamsa, paramahansa, and bhagavata paramahansa.

In the ancient times there only one caste lived in India called hamsa. They were yogis, devotees of the Lord, or knowers of Brahman engaged

in studying the Vedas. Among the hamsas, those who on the strength of either devotional service, yoga, or impersonal knowledge distinguished themselves over their respective groups were accepted by the hamsas as paramahamsas. Among the ordinary impersonalists and yogis of India, the topics of the bhagavata paramahamsas are particularly mentioned in a few places. The difference between bhagavata paramahamsas with impersonal knowledge and yogic paramahamsas is clearly explained by Sri Jiva Gosvami when he discusses Brahman, Paramatma, and Bhagavan as the advaya- jnana, or nondual Absolute Truth.

The explanation of Brahman and Jiva by Srimad Mnandatirtha Madhvacarya.

The word Brahman refers to the greatness and nourishment of unbroken knowledge or supreme consciousness, unalloyed consciousness, pure consciousness, and eternal consciousness. Srimad Anandatirtha Purnaprajna Madhvacarya Bhagavan has fully unfolded the difference between Brahman and the living entities in the hearts of his followers. He ascertained that in the constitutional position of the living entities, they are situated in unbroken knowledge. Since the living entities are constitutionally marginal, sometimes they identify themselves as under the subordination of unbroken knowledge, sometimes they misidentify themselves as Brahman or knowers of dualistic knowledge, and sometimes they misidentify themselves as matter, which is opposite to Brahman. As soon as the living entities give up the subordination of matter they realize themselves as Vaisnavas. At that time, due their spiritual nature, material desires and material conceptions of life cannot attack them.

Due to a lack of knowledge about the Supreme Brahman, unauthorized people neglect the spiritual master and glorify themselves.

The living entities' lack of knowledge about the Absolute Truth makes them ignorant of Brahman. Sometimes they accept Brahman as an inferior object and try to establish themselves as Brahman. Being desirous of material enjoyment, they sometimes determine to accept the illusory energy of the Lord as Brahman. Those who do not know the truth neglect their spiritual master and, with the help of material knowledge,

follow the ascending path. They live within this world and unnecessarily praise themselves as knowers of Brahman. The hamsas, however, know perfectly well that Brahman, which is devoid of form and variegatedness, is a partial manifestation of the Supreme Lord.

Bhagavata paramahamsas are the highest yogis and the topmost knowers of Brahman.

Some of the hamsas know the localized aspect of the Absolute Truth as Paramatma and thus disassociate themselves from the activities of this material world, which is created by the illusory energy of the Lord. The perfection of this disassociation qualifies them to meditate on the Supersoul as yogis. It is not very difficult to attain spiritual knowledge or devotional service to Visnu from the respective positions of either persons who have realized Brahman or yogis who have attained perfection, rather it is their gradual progress. The position of the devotees of the Lord, or that of bhagavata paramahamsas, is the highest perfectional platform for both impersonal hamsas and yogi hamsas. When a devotee, or bhagavata paramahamsa, descends to the lower levels, he should not be considered either a pseudo impersonalist or a pseudo yogi. The bhagavata paramahamsa is the highest yogi and supreme knower of Brahman. One should not consider him inferior to either the impersonalists or yogis.

According to the symptoms of qualities and occupation, the divisions of varnasrama are created.

When the hamsas give up impersonal knowledge and endeavor to distinguish themselves from other hamsas while following their Grhya-sutras, or social codes of conduct, then according to their qualities and activities the four varnas and four asramas are created. In Satya-yuga there was only one varna called hamsa. Later, after 1,728,000 years passed, the varnasrama system was inaugurated among the hamsas. These divisions were effected according to one's occupation, qualities, symptoms, and possibility of future utility. According to the differences in the processes of one's goal, perfection, and intelligence, there can be two types of varnasrama. It has been a current practice in this country that the ascertainment of varna according to seminal consideration is

based on future utility. Moreover, one's occupation, nature, and symptoms have always nourished the seminal system. When we discuss the topics of Kavasa mentioned in the Aitareya Upanisad and the topics of Jabala mentioned in the Chandogya Upanisad then we will properly understand seminal consideration. Sri Mahabharata, Hari-vamsa, and the eighteen Puranas have mentioned both processes of varnasrama. It is not that the system of varnasrama according to seminal consideration, which began in Treta- yuga, will continue forever and should be kept intact, though its purpose is lost— the truthful hamsas of India do not accept this. The statements of the Vedas such as the Kalpa-sastras and the Grhya-sutras of Gobhila, Katyayana, and others that a brahmana should undergo the sacred thread ceremony at the age of eight is only a proposal. Although all hamsas are equal, those who wish to follow the Grhya- sutras and their descendants are to be considered prospective brahmanas. A twice- born brahmana is required to undergo social purificatory processes. Those who disagree or are unqualified for such samskaras, in other words, those who do not exhibit any inclination for Brahman, such people among the hamsas are non- brahmanas devoid of samskaras, or simply seminal descendants. A twice-born must follow the rules and regulation of the Grhya-sutras. According to familial tradition, those who followed were accepted as twice-born. Those hamsas who due to envious nature or laziness were addressed as sudras by the brahmanas could not become twice-born. When the descendants of such people will be in favor of undergoing social reformation, then they will not be bereft of the opportunity from being reinstated in their respective occupation, quality, and nature.

Due to forgetfulness of understanding Brahman, the philosophy of atheism expands and the Absolute Truth is disregarded.

Among the hamsas, the occupations, natures, and symptoms of the yogis, the worshipers, and the knowers of Brahman have always been there, are there, and will be there. In ancient times, when the varnasrama system was not prominent, the hamsas alone attained the platform of bhagavata paramahamsas. There were also many paramahamsas found amongst the yogis, who were less inclined towards cultivation of the Absolute Truth, and amongst the impersonalists, who were engaged in

mental speculation. But when the impersonal conception among the hamsas of the world gradually sank in the deep water of forgetfulness, then atheism began to expand, the words of the spiritual master were reduced to chaos, and disregard for the truths of the Vedas covered the hearts of some hamsas like fog. Being deceived by their own material knowledge, they began to disrespect the Absolute Truth. In this way, the hamsas were divided into four varnas. (Weekly GauBiya, Vol. 1)

The different varnas

Only the varna called hamsa existed among the people of Satya-yuga; divisions were created in Treta-yuga.

In ancient times there were no divisions of varna among the people of India. Later, in the beginning of Treta-yuga the process of dividing the varnas was introduced.

It is stated in the Seventeenth Chapter of the Eleventh Canto of Sri mad Bhagavatam as follows:

*adau kṛta-yuge varno nṛnam hamsa iti smṛtaḥ*

*treta-mukhe maha-bhaga prāṇaṁ me hrdayāt trayi*

*vipra-ksatriya-vīṭ-sudra mukha-bahuru-pada-jāḥ*

*vairajāṭ puruṣaj jāta ya atmacara-lakṣaṇaḥ*

“In the beginning, in Satya-yuga, there is only one social class, called hamsa, to which all human beings belong. O greatly fortunate one, at the beginning of Treta- yuga Vedic knowledge appeared from My heart, which is the abode of the air of life, in three divisions—as Rg, Sama and Yajur. The brahmanas appeared from the Lord's face, the ksatriyas from the Lord's arms, the vaisyas from the Lord's thighs and the sudras from the legs of that mighty form. Each social division was recognized by its particular duties and behavior.” In his commentary on Mahabharata (Santi-parva 188.4), Sri Nilakantha has said: *varṇaḥ satvikam rajasam tamasam miśram ceti svacchatvadi samat guṇa-vṛtam varṇa sabdenocyate*—“The different varnas were created according to the



mixture of the three modes of nature—goodness, passion, and ignorance—as well as according to one's qualification and propensities.” The word varna refers to the qualities and occupation of the living entities.

The brahmanas are the highest among the varnas—the ksatriyas, vaisyas, and sudras are determined according to qualities and activities.

Sri Bharadvaja has said in Sri Mahabharata, Santi-parva, Moksa-dharma, Chapter 188, as follows:

*jangamanam asankhyeyah      sthavaranam ca jatayah*

*tesam vividha-varnanam kuto varna-viniscayah*

“There are innumerable castes among the animate and inanimate living entities. How does one conclusively ascertain their various varnas?” In answer to this, Bhrgu has said:

*na viseso' sti varnanam sarvam brahmam-idam jagat*

*brahmana purva-srstam hi karmabhir-varnatam gatam*

*brahmananam sito varnah      ksatriyanam tu lohita*

*vaisyam plitakam varnah      sudranam asitas tatha*

Actually the living entity does not belong to any varna, in other words, a soul is devoid of any varna. In ancient times Lord Brahma created this world and filled it with brahmanas. Later on, according to their activities, people were divided into various varnas, such as ksatriya. Since the brahmanas possess the qualities of goodness, such as peacefulness and self-control, they are white-colored. The ksatriyas possess the propensities of passion such as heroism and strength, so they are red-colored. The vaisyas possess the mixed qualities of passion and ignorance such as farming, and thus they are yellow-colored. The sudras are simply in the mode of ignorance, devoid of any self-manifested propensity, like a cart directed by others, and thus they are black-colored. Persons who engage in all types of activities become envious, fond of speaking lies, and greedy because of being controlled by the mode of

ignorance. Due to being devoid of all samskaras, such people become impure and thus degrade from their positions of ksatriyas and vaisyas to the platform of sudras. Because of these low-class activities, the brahmanas degraded from their position and attained positions such as ksatriya.

All living entities are by nature qualified to understand Brahman and possess the qualities of goodness. When they are in the mode of goodness they are white, and by the mixture of goodness and passion they become red. When people are in the mixed modes of passion and ignorance, devoid of goodness, they are yellow; and people who are simply in the mode of ignorance, devoid of the modes of goodness and passion, become black. One accepts a particular color and is thus identified as belonging to that varna, therefore his varna is determined by the color and qualities that he possesses. The brahmanas are situated as the root or topmost among these divisions of varnas.

The history of the origin of the brahmanas mentioned in the Vedas and

Upanisads; the rules and regulations for undergoing the sacred thread ceremony.

The divisions of brahmanas are found in the Purusa-sukta section of the Rg Veda (10.90.11). The origin of the brahmanas is described in the Krsna-yajur-veda- samhita (7.1.1.4), the Sukla-yajur-veda-samhita (14.28), the Atharva Veda (15.10.1 and 19.6.6), the Taittirlya Brahmana (1.2.6.7 and 3.12.9.3), as well as in the Satapatha Brahmana (2.1.4.13).

The rules for making the son of a qualified twice-born who has properly undergone the forty-eight purificatory processes a brahmana is followed by the seminal descendants of the brahmanas. In this way they undergo purificatory processes and are accepted as brahmanas. Knowing that the son of a brahmana is eligible for becoming a brahmana, statements such as asta-varsam brahmanam upanaylta—"a brahmana should undergo the sacred thread ceremony at the age of eight" are found in the Vedas. Also in the Gobhillya Grhya-sutras it is stated: garbhastamesu brahmanam upanayet—"a brahmana should be awarded the sacred thread at the age of eight." The period for undergoing this ceremony extends up to the age of sixteen. When one surpasses this age, he

should not be awarded the brahmana thread. Such a person is called a fallen twice-born as well as a vratya, or one who fails to fulfill his vow. A vratya should neither be given a sacred thread, be allowed to study the Vedas, nor given a daughter in charity.

The upanayana-samskara and qualification for spiritual initiation according to the Vedic Grhya injunctions.

It is mentioned in the smrtis:

*grhyokta-karmana yena samlpam nlyate guroh*

*balo vedaya tad yogat balasyopanayanam viduh*

“According to Vedic Grhya injunctions, the ceremony in which a boy is taken to an acarya, or Vedic teacher, for studying the Vedas is called upanayana, or the sacred thread ceremony. There is no use of studying the Vedas before one's knowledge is matured. That is why it takes a minimum of seven years to complete other necessary purificatory processes before one is ready for upanayana. It is not proper to take a boy to an acarya for studying the Vedas before the age of eight. It is not possible for a boy of that age to live in the gurukula, away from his parent's house. During the course of his Vedic studies, a brahmana becomes qualified for following the Vedic injunctions. Ultimately he gets the opportunity to be initiated in a fire sacrifice. If there is no possibility of sending a brahmana boy to the house of an acarya before the age of sixteen, or if the young brahmana boy has no taste or desire for studying the Vedas, then it is to be understood that according to his taste he does not wish to become a brahmana by undergoing the upanayana samskara. From the topics of Jada Bharata it is understood that though he was born in a brahmana family that strictly followed the purificatory processes, he was never inclined towards ritualistic ceremonies. If the boy born in a brahmana family exhibits no taste even for becoming a ksatriya or vaisya, then he will neither want to go to gurukula or undergo the preliminary purificatory processes. In the process of Vedic karma-kanda, the fire is accepted as the original ingredient in all samskaras. This karma-kanda process is a polished stone meant for some future purpose, but the end result is uncertain.

It is not a fact that material endeavors will always be successful. Whether a boy is interested or not, his father and society force him to go to gurukula in order to keep the family and social tradition intact. The result of this is that though the boy is induced by his father or others to follow their proposed fruitive activities, he often does not achieve the desired result due to a lack of qualification and taste.

For this reason, even though a brahmana boy acts according to the instructions of his well-wishers and undergoes the sacred thread ceremony, he nevertheless later changes his varna to ksatriya, vaisya, sudra, or outcaste.

The varnas are meant for only the gross and subtle bodies of a living entity.

Only the gross and subtle bodies accept varnas. A soul's qualification for accepting varnas lies only in his two bodies. Although a hamsa, or a brahmana free from the three modes of material nature, accepts a body, nevertheless he is born from the limbs of the universal form of the Lord. Therefore his unchangeable transcendental existence is divided into four categories according to conditional mundane considerations. The qualities and activities produced from these qualities are the cause for dividing the varnas of the living entities, who are otherwise equipoised. The totality of human beings are divided into four categories according to their symptoms. If one wants to know a person by his symptoms or by the process of division, then it is to be understood that his gross bodily identification is limited to his father's family. Later on his subtle identification or occupational identification helps create the division of varnas. While observing the symptoms of a brahmana's subtle identification, we often end up analyzing the origin of his gross body. But if we conclude that the subtle body has emanated from the gross body, then we have to accept that a seed comes from the skin of a fruit. Then we will have to say that the gross body is the father of the subtle body. But actually such a fantasy is not approved in consideration of the subtle body. When the gross body is finished, the subtle body thinks of accepting another gross body, therefore it is understood that the subtle body existed before the gross body. Those who accept the process of reincarnation or karma do not believe that the subtle body has come from the gross, rather they accept that the subtle body puts on a gross

covering. Material desires alone accumulate the ingredients for a gross body from this world, consisting of the three modes of nature. The ingredients that a gross body gradually accepts from this world are actually approved by the subtle body, or the mind. The living entity's tastes develop due to his subtle body, and the gross body is forced to accept them. The mind, or the subtle body, which is a reflection of spirit, is the cause for accepting gross elements.

Ascertainment of varnas is possible only by occupation, it is not bound by seminal consideration.

The color of varna is determined through the process of seeing. Imagination is created or conceptions manifest through senses like the eyes. When a person's external identification is determined through the process of gross seeing, then the identification of that person's varna is limited to seminal consideration. But thoughtful persons ascertain that the consideration of one's occupation is the only criteria for determining one's varna. Since everyone will not be sufficiently thoughtful, seminal identification is given prominence in order to properly execute gross social activities or determine sexual relationships. When the seminal identification process is prominent, then there is possibility of many problems in ascertaining one's varna. That is why we do not usually find an agreement on this subject in ordinary Dharma-sastras or Grhya-sCtras. When the Vedic rituals are converted into the fruitive path of asslike less intelligent people, then following the injunctions of the Pancaratras takes precedence to those Vedic rituals. The injunctions of the Pancaratras, which replaces the Vedic ritualistic performances, consists of five forms of knowledge as found in the Vedas, the Aranyaka, and pure Sankhya bhakti-yoga. The Vedic rituals defined by the fruitive workers are different from the rituals conducted by the followers of the Aranyaka. The Vedic rituals of devotees on the path of worship are supported by the Pancaratras and the Vedas. The Vedic rituals of the impersonalists are supported by the Upanisads. The smrtis and the Puranas have illuminated the subject of the Vedas. They did not totally discourage the polluted Vedic path of the fruitive workers, rather they consider this path as incomplete and meant for less intelligent people.

Those who reject the path of the Vedas, the smrtis, the Puranas and the

Pancaratras

are simply creating disturbances.

That is why Sri Narada-pancaratra states:

*sruti-smṛti-puranādi- pancaratra-vidhim vina*

*aikāntiki harer bhaktir utpatayaiva kalpate*

“Devotional service of the Lord that ignores the authorized Vedic literatures like the Upanisads, Puranas, and Narada-pancaratra is simply an unnecessary disturbance in society.” When the rules and regulations of the Vedas are inappropriate due to differences in time, place, and persons, then tantras that are favorable to the Vedas or expansions of the Vedas that are able to fulfill such deficiency are called Pancaratras. The Pancaratra scriptures emanated from the mouth of Sri Narayana in order to keep the Vedic injunctions intact and fulfill the vacancy created by obstructions to the proper utility of the varnasrama principles mentioned in the Grhyas, which are subordinate to the Vedic injunctions. The Vedic process that does not take support from the Pancaratras is often obstructed. Any system followed in the name of Vedic injunctions that is opposed to the Pancaratras and that encourages a distorted form of worshiping Lord Visnu is nothing but a disturbance in the society.

The worship of the Supreme Lord that is beyond the realm of sense enjoyment and liberation is superior to the worship of either the karmis, who are fond of sense enjoyment, or the jnanis, who are fond of liberation.

Due to the influence of time, the rules and regulations of the Grhyas or Vedic injunctions are not being properly followed. The glories of Sandilya's Pancaratra, which was misinterpreted by Sri Sankaracarya as averse to the Vedas, have been established in Sri Mahabharata since time immemorial as favorable to the Vedas. The activities that puffed-up fruitive workers consider Vedic are actually material enjoyment that according to the followers of Pancaratra is averse to the devotional service of Visnu. In the hands of the karmis the Vedic literatures yield forgetfulness of the Lord, while in the hands of the followers of the

Pancaratra the very same Vedic literatures are accepted as the basis for worshipping Lord Hari. The fruitive activities based on material enjoyment, the impersonal knowledge based on renunciation, and the worship of the Lord based on service attitude, which is beyond material enjoyment and mental speculation, produce different results among the three communities. Although they all endeavor to follow the Vedic injunctions, there are differences among them. Therefore if one wants to debate over the various Vedic injunctions and the varnasrama system followed by these three communities of people—the karmis, jnanis, and bhaktas—it is very difficult to achieve success.

We will gradually discuss the terms and conditions for accepting grhya-samskaras, which are properly established by Vedic injunctions in the Mahabharata, the Satvata-samhitas, the Srimad Bhagavatam, and the Pancaratra. (Weekly Gaudiya, Vol. 1, Part 19)

### The third birth

There are three kinds of birth—saukra, savitra, and daiksa.

Although “third birth” may sound new to many persons, there are so many references to this in the scriptures. Those who have studied the Bhargaviya Manu- samhita must have come across the following verse in the Second Chapter: matur agre 'dhi-jananam dvitiam maunjibandhane —“a brahmana gets his first birth from his mother (saukra-janma, seminal birth), and he gets his second birth by receiving the sacred thread (savitra-janma).” When a twice-born receives spiritual initiation in the form of hearing the Vedas (about one's relationship with the Lord) along with fire sacrifice, it is called “third birth.” The first birth is the birth from one's father and mother. After duly undergoing the purificatory processes one receives second birth from a father in the form of the acarya and a mother in the form of Gayatri. When a twice-born becomes qualified to serve the Supreme Lord, he gets his third birth from a father in the form of the spiritual master and a mother in the form of initiation mantras. In the ascending path, three births—the birth of the body, the birth of the mind, and the formal birth—are found. These three births are described in Sri mad Bhagavatam as saukra, savitra, and daiksa births. It is stated in Sri mad Bhagavatam (4.31.10 and 10.23.40) as follows: kim janmabhis

tribhir veva saukra-savitra-yajnikaiḥ—“A civilized human being has three kinds of births. The first birth is by a pure father and mother, and this birth is called birth by semen. The next birth takes place when one is initiated by the spiritual master, and this birth is called savitra. The third birth, called yajnika, takes place when one is given the opportunity to worship Lord Viṣṇu.” and dhig janma naś tri-vrd yat tad dhig vratam dhig bahu-jnatam—“To hell with our threefold birth, our vow of celibacy, and our extensive learning!” In his commentary on the later verse, Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda has written: trivrt saukram savitram daiksam iti trigunitam janma. sukra-sambandhi-janma viśuddha-mata-pltrbhyam utpattih. savitryam upanayanena yajnikam dīksaya.—“There are three kinds of birth—saukra, savitra, and daiksa—according to their different qualities. The saukra-janma refers to birth from a pure father and mother, the savitra-janma refers to birth by undergoing the sacred thread ceremony, and daiksa-janma refers to spiritual initiation before the sacrificial fire.” Birth from a pure father and mother means brahmanad brahmanyam jataḥ—“a brahmana is born from a brahmana father and mother.”

The qualifications of seminal brahmanas and examples of professional brahmanas.

One who can ascertain the forefathers of his family beginning from Lord Brahma without any break, who can confirm that they have all properly undergone the ten purificatory processes, who can prove that there was never any intercaste marriages in his family, and who can establish that before each pregnancy the appropriate saṃskaras have been performed—he is a seminal brahmana. The Vedic statement asta-varṣam brahmanam upanayīta—“a brahmana boy should be brought to an ācārya for sacred thread ceremony at the age of eight” and the smṛti statement garbhastame bde kurvita brahmanasyopāyanam—“a brahmana should be awarded the sacred thread at the age of eight” refer only to the above- mentioned brahmanas, not to the sons of brahmanas who have been accepted as brahmanas only from a few generations. In other words, it does not refer to those in whose family an intercaste marriage took place, to those who have undergone garbhadhāna-saṃskara only once, or to those who have improperly or imperfectly undergone saṃskaras. “Brahmanas from a few generations” means



either the descendants of those who have taken birth in other varnas yet qualified themselves as brahmanas or those who were qualified brahmanas according to the process mentioned in the Vedic literatures. Just as the Gargya brahmanas were descendants of Sini, the son of Garga; the Maudgalya brahmanas were descendants of Mudgala; the Vasistha brahmanas were descendants of sage Vasistha, the son of Mitra from the womb of Urvashi; and so on—innumerable such brahmana families, though not saukra brahmanas, will remain glorified as brahmanas as long as they continue to remain qualified, which is the root foundation of brahmanism.

One's position as a brahmana is determined according to the Vedas and the Pancaratras.

If the descendants of either seminal or professional brahmanas do not possess the necessary qualifications, then they are also fallen. It is stated in Mahabharata, Vana-parva, Chapter 215 as follows:

*brahmanah patanlyesu vartamano vikarmasu*

*dambhiko duskrtah prajnah sudrena sadrso bhavet*

“If a brahmana is engaged in sinful activities, if he is proud, or if he is a miscreant, then he falls to the level of a sudra.” According to this statement from the scriptures it is difficult in this age of Kali to ascertain who is in a pure unbroken seminal brahmana line and who is not. Therefore, through the ascending process it is very uncommon to identify a real twice-born or thrice-born. But those who receive the knowledge of serving the transcendental Lord through the process of disciplic succession and follow the Vedic injunctions, they are becoming qualified to undergo the samskaras mentioned in the Vedic literatures. In this age of Kali, there is no other way of becoming purified.

*asuddhah sudra-kalpa hi brahmanah kali-sambhava*

*tesam agama-margena suddhir na srota-vartmana*

“The brahmanas born in the age of Kali are merely sudras. Their so-

called Vedic path of karma is polluted and cannot purify them. They can only be purified by following the path of the Agamas or Pancaratras.” Therefore, at present, a brahmana should be accepted as such only if he follows the rules and regulations of the satvata-agamas, tantras, or Pancaratras, since the scriptures clearly mention that brahmanas born in this age of Kali are impure, or their purity is not maintained through seminal descent. Therefore according to Vedic injunctions, they cannot even become twice-born in their impure state, and what to speak of becoming thrice-born.

Necessity of the sacred thread ceremony after receiving pancaratrika initiation.

According to the process of Vaisnava literatures in pursuance of the Vedas, an impure person can become pure only by spiritual initiation; there cannot be any other arrangement for purification. It does not matter in which family one is born, either in a so-called brahmana family or a lower family, if he wants to be purified in this age of Kali then he should earn his qualification to be twice-born by first being initiated according to the rules and regulations of the Vedic Pancaratras and thereafter accept the signs of a twice-born. It is stated in the scriptures:

*yatha kancanatam yati kamsyam rasa-vidhanatah tatha dlksa-vidhanena dvijatvam jayate nram*

“As bell metal is turned to gold when mixed with mercury in an alchemical process, so one who is properly trained and initiated by a bona fide spiritual master immediately becomes a brahmana.” Every human being must take Vaisnava initiation according to the proper Vedic Pancaratra process, then he becomes a qualified twice-born, who must then accept the appropriate signs such as the sacred thread.

Those who consider paramahamsas, who are eternally pure and beyond the principles of varnasrama, as belonging to a particular caste have a hellish mentality.

The paramahamsas, who are actually eternally perfect pure souls, are beyond the principles of varnasrama. They need not again purify themselves. Therefore they may also not accept the sacred thread. This

does not mean, however, that they are in any way less than a thrice-born. They are the spiritual masters of the brahmanas, and the brahmanas are their servants.

The four varnas were created according to quality and work, and examples of twice-borns who were properly initiated.

In ancient times there was only one varna called hamsa. Later on, according to qualities and work, the four varnas were created—there were not four varnas in the beginning. Of course, there is a gulf of difference between the four varnas and their respective qualifications. Intelligent people should carefully consider this. Apart from the four varnas created by the Lord, the system of a son's purely inheriting the varna of his father has also been accepted. This is called seminal varna. But every reader of the scriptures knows that the seminal process is not the only way of ascertaining one's varna. He certainly knows that among the one hundred sons of Rsabhadeva, eighty-one of them became brahmanas, nine of them became ksatriyas, and nine became Vaisnavas. Apart from brahmana sons such as Saunaka, Grtsamada also had ksatriya, vaisya and sudra sons. The sons of the ksatriya Duritaksaya—Trayyaruni, Kavi, and Puskararuni—became brahmanas. In the dynasty of King Ajamidha, the brahmana Priyamedha was born. There are hundreds of such examples in the scriptures. Though Sathakopa Dasa, the spiritual master of Sri Sri Ramanujacarya Prabhu, was born in the family of a sudra, he was a brahmana. And in the Gaudiya Vaisnava society, in the families of Srila Rasikananda Prabhu, Srila Raghunandana, Sri Hari Hoda, and others, performance of the twice-born samskara is still current. This spiritual position of brahmanas, attained through spiritual initiation, has been accepted by intelligent people from time immemorial. There is no need to be surprised by seeing or hearing this. (Weekly Gaudiya, Vol.I, Part 28)

Vaisnave jati-buddhi

Although Brahman, Paramatma, and Bhagavan are one nondual substance, the materialists maintain misconceptions.

Sri Vyasadeva has said: agni surya brahmanebhyas tejiyan vaisnava?

sada.—“A Vaisnava is always more powerful than the fire, the sun, or the brahmanas.” Many people present false arguments on this statement and create various philosophies. Ignorance is the root cause of such mistakes or faults. The brahmanas, yogis, and Vaisnavas are all servants of the advaya-jnana, or nondual substance. This is accepted by all learned knowers of the truth. So many people will not be able to understand the above statement that a Vaisnava is more powerful than a brahmana or a yogi. Srila Jiva Gosvami Prabhu has instructed in his Sat-sandarbha that although Brahman, Paramatma, and Bhagavan are one nondual substance, many people are confused about the usage of the word bhagavata in place of Brahman, as the word Brahman is distinct from the word bhagavata from the ignorant point of view. Whenever materialists try to separate the noun from its adjectives while considering Brahman and Paramatma, false arguments immediately lead them to the kingdom of misconceptions. The meaning of the word Brahman that creates differentiation with the word bhagavata in this qualitative world certainly lacks the consideration of the nondual substance. The considerations of material variegatedness and nonvariegatedness create mixed feelings in spiritual consciousness. The prominence of the inferiority of Brahman and partiality of Paramatma in considerations of the unadulterated, pure spiritual object more or less destroys the conception of a nondual substance.

Transcendental philosophers attain the platform of liberation while considering the constitutional position of the Vaisnavas.

Who is a Vaisnava? This consideration creates different conceptions in the discriminating vision of the philosopher and points towards the existence of one's original constitutional position in the equal vision of the philosopher. There cannot be any tinge of matter in the realization of spiritual variegatedness or in the constitutional position and vision of the seer. Whenever there is an attempt of attributing matter on spirit, it should be known for certain that spiritual nature has been attacked by envy in the form of matter. When the material attachment of the sense gratifiers become very prominent in their pure hearts, then they become very proud as non-Vaisnavas. This is due to their material absorption, which is unrelated to God, and it simply causes fear.

It is stated in Srimad Bhagavatam: muktir hitvanyatha-rupam svarupena vyavasthith—*aMukti*, or the philosopher's liberation, means giving up all other activities and being situated in one's constitutional position (*sva-rupena vyavasthith*). When a philosopher is conditioned by sensual knowledge, then material vision will distract him from the truth. But if transcendental sound vibration enters his earholes, he will be freed from the contamination of mundane sound vibrations. The contamination of mundane sound is simply under the control of the eyes, nose, tongue, touch, and their leader, the mind. Since these five senses and their aggregate, the mind, are eligible for being conditioned by material conceptions, they are indifferent to inclination towards God, which is the eternal constitutional duty of the living entities. In other words, by misusing his sensual propensities a living entity cannot achieve eternal benefit. If one is entangled in unwanted desires, he will not understand the activities and characteristics of the Vaisnavas, no matter how intelligent he may be. Then the conditioned soul falls into misconceptions and forgets his constitutional position. As a result, various proposals and ideas make him wander in the environment of the false ego. By the mercy of either Kṛṣṇa or His devotees, transcendental sound vibration makes friendship with a genuine desire for *sādhana*. In such a condition a living entity realizes his own constitutional position and experiences the difference between pure *sanātana-dharma* and other *dharma*'s born of envy.

The materialists and the Mayavadis are unable to understand the transcendental holy names, the Lord, and the Vaisnavas.

For those who consider the body and mind as nondifferent from the soul, there is no possibility of awakening transcendental knowledge. That is why they do not take shelter of the holy names of the Lord, which are nondifferent from the Lord, and therefore their material senses, which are the source of material disease, whimsically create temporary illusions in their minds. Only the transcendental holy names of the Lord can cure them from their disease.

Those who have taken shelter of the Supreme Lord no longer remain servants of temporary ignorance and unhappiness. But the mentality of *I am a servant of māyā* captures the taste of conditioned souls and guides

them to the path of either karma or jnana. One who is freed from this can recognize a Vaisnava. The material enjoyers and the Mayavadis are forever unable to recognize a Vaisnava.

An offender who commits offences against the holy names and the Vaisnavas is fit for atonement.

Without realizing their constitutional position, many people who are averse to the Lord consider that the most worshipable Sri Jhadu Thakura belonged to the farmer class, consider Sri Nityananda Prabhu, the son of Hado Ojha as a simple brahmana from Mithila, and consider Sri Haridasa Thakura as an outcaste. In this way they commit offences at the lotus feet of Sri Visnu and the Vaisnavas. Actually offences are not less grievous than sinful activities. To transgress temporary worldly moralities is called sin, and to deviate from spiritual moralities is called offence. To commit offence is an eternal fault. There is no alternative to become free from offences against the holy names and the Vaisnavas other than service to the Vaisnavas. The mentality of the offender of Vaisnavas does not allow him to worship the Vaisnavas but rather creates misconceptions that Vaisnavas belong to a particular caste. That is why learned scholars say that materialists consider Vaisnavas as non-Vaisnavas like themselves and try to bring them on their level. Then they become proper candidates for atonement, otherwise, according to smṛti literature, they will certainly live in hell

A well-behaved Vaisnava engaged in devotional service and following sanatana-dharma is a qualified judge of spiritual varnasrama.

Only a Vaisnava is a qualified judge for considering a person's spiritual varnasrama status, because he is not infected by the four defects of life, such as to commit mistakes, to be illusioned, to cheat others, and to possess imperfect senses. Moreover, having heard the transcendental sound vibration, he regrets the misfortune of those who have not, so he specifically prays to Kṛṣṇa to bless such people.

*matur agre 'dhi-jananam dvitiam maunjibandhane*

*trtiyam yajna-diksayam dvijasya sruti-codanat8*

The offenders who neglect the above-mentioned statement of the smṛti can never understand the subject matter of the three types of birth, beginning with seminal birth. They are always ready to insult the Vaiṣṇavas with their duplicitous nature, and as soon as they happen to hear the statements of the scriptures they feel embarrassed. The *adaiva-varnasrama* system established by the puffed-up pseudo smartas is not accepted either by the daiva-varnasrama system or by the religious scriptures. Those who have not studied the Gaudīya magazine in the last few years may due to their duplicitous nature loudly call for establishing the *adaiva-varnasrama* system, but in reply to this, the servants of the Gaudīya Matha, who are engaged in devotional service and followers of pure sanatana-dharma, will point out their immature considerations and try hard to bring them back on the proper path.

The Pancaratras and smṛti-sastras such as the Puranas accept the changing of varnas and asramas.

A Vaiṣṇava may live at home, yet he is able to carry out his spiritual duties. Although the materialistic followers of the *adaiva-varnasrama* system cannot understand this fact, Śrī Mahabharata and Śrī mad Bhagavatam will gradually help them understand these topics. The Vaiṣṇava Pancaratra literatures and the smṛti literatures such as the Puranas accept the changing of one's varna and asrama during one's life. The childish mentality exhibited by followers of the *adaiva-varnasrama* system who pursue the *nagna-matrka* logic<sup>9</sup>, simply displays their foolishness and weakness of heart. The feeble thoughts of the followers of the *adaiva-varnasrama* system simply make them unsocial narrow-minded people.

Envious people who are devoid of devotional service are naturally fools and ill-behaved.

The disciples of those who repeatedly try to create disturbances and are envious of Śrī Mayapur, the abode of the Supreme Lord, are fond of false arguments and display their poverty with their ancient language. As long as these people maintain their envious nature, they will not understand

the characteristics of devotional service. The most worshipable Srila Krsnadasa Kaviraja Gosvami Prabhu has addressed these people, who are devoid of devotional service, as fools and sinners. A hypocrite can never recognize a Vaisnava. Therefore it is said:

*arcye visnau sila-dhlr gurusu nara-matir vaisnave jati-buddhir*

*visnau sarvesvarese tad-itara-sama-dhlr yasya va naraki sah*

“One who considers the arca-mCrti (the worshipable Deity of Lord Visnu) to be stone, the spiritual master to be an ordinary human being, a Vaisnava to belong to a particular creed, or Lord Visnu, who is the supreme controller, as equal to the demigods is possessed of hellish intelligence.” This statement of the smṛti spoken by Sri Kṛṣṇa-dvaipayana Vyāsadeva should constantly be considered by such people. (Weekly Gaudya, Vol.II, Part 17 and Sri Gaudya Patrika, Vol.13, Part 2)

Mundane sudras are not Vaisnavas

The difference between Sri Gaura Bhagavan's spiritual world and material world

Lord Sri Gaura has two kingdoms—the first consists of His eternal abodes such as Vaikuntha and Goloka and the second consists of the brahmandas, or universes, known as Devi-dhama. The existence of the Vaikuntha abodes are beyond the material creation, in other words, they are situated in the spiritual kingdom. The material time factor has no entry into that realm, material qualities have no access there, and the condemned lusty activities of the conditioned souls have no jurisdiction there. In the heavenly planets of this material world one finds the interactions of the material modes of nature, the enjoyment of the results of one's karma, and absence of love of Kṛṣṇa. Lord Sri Gaura creates the eternally manifested Vaikunthas and perishable brahmandas through Maha-Visnu, who lies down on the Causal Ocean, and who is a plenary portion of Sankarsana, who resides in Maha-Vaikuntha, and who is a manifestation of Sri Nityananda Prabhu, who is an expansion of Sri Gaura. Since Maha-Visnu, who lies on the Causal Ocean, creates perishable brahmandas, nobody should consider Vaikuntha as similar to Devi-dhama. The brahmandas are material worlds and under the



jurisdiction of the time factor. But the Vaikunthas are spiritual and beyond the material time.

In the spiritual world there are no sudras.

There is no eternal gross existence of the different varnas such as brahmanas and ksatriyas in the spiritual world, rather they exist only in the form of expression. It is not that because in this material world we can see the temporary existence of brahmanas and ksatriyas that there have to be sudras in the spiritual world. The non-Vaisnava sect of prakrtasahajiyas think that the gross existence of the temporary identification as sudras in this material world helps one enter into the spiritual kingdom, so they disrespect the brahmanas of this material kingdom.

The sahajiyas are faultfinders, sudras, and sinful; hence they are non-Vaisnavas.

People condemn the sahajiyas because they do not respect the brahmanas. Since they disregard the brahmanas, they naturally consider them non-brahmanas or devoid of good qualities. While travelling throughout the universes, conditioned souls engage in various sinful activities and thus lose their worldly prestige. Due to their past misdeeds, sinful people become maddened by the pride of being sudras. By the influence of previous pious activities the conditioned soul becomes prestigious as a qualified brahmana. Because the mundane sahajiyas are sinful-minded, they love to address and hate the Vaisnavas as sudras; they indirectly call them sinful and claim that a sudra cannot become a Vaisnava. The sahajiyas do not believe that all great qualities are present in a Vaisnava, so they think that they will be benefited by being attached to sinful activities.

Only the brahmanas are qualified to become Vaisnavas, not others.

When the brahmanas, who are situated in the mode of goodness in this material kingdom, give up their relationship with other mixed qualities, then they become transcendental to all the material modes of nature. At that point he is situated in pure goodness and becomes a Vaisnava with twenty-six qualities. When a brahmana gives up his authority for performing fruitive activities and the desire for accepting daksina

contributions, then his propensity for being a servant of Lord Visnu is awakened. He then surpasses the kingdom of maya, where Lord Visnu is not always seen, and after achieving the lotus feet of Lord Visnu in the spiritual world, which is devoid of material enjoyment, he cultivates devotional service.

The brahmanas are situated in the mode of goodness; the sudras are covered with ignorance and are sinful.

As long as the living entity thinks that becoming a sudra is the basis for serving Visnu, he considers himself fallen and sinful; and by serving material objects, he considers that non-Vaisnavism, which is devoid of service to Hari, is Vaisnavism. The living entities who are covered by the mode of ignorance are sudras, and the living entities who are situated in the mode of goodness are brahmanas. The sinful sudras can never serve Lord Visnu with their sinful ingredients. Even a pious, ambitious brahmana who is situated in the mode of mixed goodness and absorbed in matter cannot serve Lord Visnu. That is why a person who is proud of his varna is not qualified to serve Lord Visnu.

The process of becoming a Vaisnava or servant of Hari.

When one rejects the pride arising from being a proper follower of the system of varnasrama, he becomes eligible for the transcendental service of Lord Hari. Unless a sudra gives up his sinful nature he cannot become a Vaisnava, and unless a brahmana gives up his pious fruitive activities with his body, mind, and speech he cannot become a Vaisnava. The Supreme Lord has said in Bhagavad-gita (4.13) as follows: *catur-varnyam maya srstam guna-karma-vibhagasah*. The Lord has created the four varnas according to their qualities and activities. Until the indulgence in material qualities is not diminished by the propensity for serving Lord Hari, a living entity continues to perform fruitive activities. In other words, he continues to wander in the kingdom of material enjoyment. If a person who is situated in the principles of varnasrama serves Lord Hari while maintaining the pride of being a brahmana, there is no possibility of his attaining unalloyed devotional service to Lord Hari. Then the living entity engages in devotional service mixed with fruitive

activities. Then the brahmana engaged in devotional service mixed with karma becomes qualified to possess the twenty-six qualities of a Vaisnava and be identified as a Vaisnava in this world. But when he begins to worship Hari without fruitive desires, then he achieves pure devotional service.

Examples showing a Vaisnava is not a sudra; he is the spiritual master of the brahmanas.

Many ambitious brahmanas who have taken shelter of devotional service mixed with fruitive activities dare to attribute the abomination of caste upon pure Vaisnavas like Haridasa Thakura, Uddharana Datta Thakura, Narahari Sarakara Thakura, Navanl Hoda Thakura, and Syamananda Prabhu. Moreover, fruitive brahmanas who became Vaisnavas like Ganganarayana Cakravarti, Ramakrsna Bhattacharya, and Yadunandana Cakravarti have taken shelter of the glorious lotus feet of the servants of Hari and thus established that the Vaisnavas are transcendental ideals for the brahmanas. If a Vaisnava were a sudra or sinful, then Srila Thakura Narahari, Srila Thakura Narottama, Srila Syamananda Prabhu, Srila Rasikananda Prabhu, Srila Thakura Krsna Dasa, and Srila Gosvami Raghunatha Dasa would never be adored as spiritual masters of many brahmanas engaged in devotional service mixed with fruitive activities.

According to social and scriptural opinion, a non-brahmana is unqualified for serving Hari.

As soon as we give the mentality of a sudra or ambitious brahmana, then we will not see any discrimination in the sinful or pious caste of Vaisnavas who give and accept the devotional service of Hari. Otherwise, why are we so eager to classify the Vaisnavas as sudras (without samskaras) while performing devotion service mixed with fruitive activities meant for some irrelevant purpose. The sastras, the religious principles, and society say that other than brahmanas no other varna has the right to serve the Absolute Truth. That is why the ambitious brahmanas who maintain irrelevant desires have a propensity to hate Vaisnavas as sudras. They do not even hesitate to say that the Vaisnavas have no alternative but to become sudras because of sinful activities. But this type of consideration is the main obstacle for serving

the servants of Hari. Unless one gives up unfavorable considerations, he can not make advancement in the path of devotional service. (Sajjana-tosanI, No. 20)

The seminal brahmana

The symptoms of a brahmana described in Vajra-sucikopanisad.

The names of 108 Upanisads are mentioned in the Muktikopanisad. Among them, the thirty-sixth Upanisad is called Vajra-sucikopanisad. It is said that Sri Sankaracarya composed an elaborate commentary on this Upanisad and thus became very famous. It is described in Vajra-sucika-sruti as follows:

*tarhi ko va brahmano nama. yah kascid atmanam advitlyam jati-guna-kriya-hlnam sad-urmi-sad-bhavety-adi-sarva-dosa-rahitam satya-jnananandananta-svarupam svayam nirvikalpam asesakalpadharam asesabhutantar-yamitvena vartamanam antar bahis cakasa-vad anusyutam akhandananda-svabhavam apremeyam anubhavaika-vedyam aparoksataya bhasamanam kara-talamalaka-vat saksad aparoksl-krtaya krtarthataya kama-ragadi-dosa-rahitah sama-damadisampanno bhava-matsarya-trsuasa-mohadi-rahito dambhahankaradibhir asamsprsta ceta vartate. evam ukta-laksano yah sa eva brahmana iti sruti-smrti-puranetihasanam abhiprayah. anyatha hi brahmanatvasiddhir nasty eva.*

“Then who is the brahmana? Anyone who knows the Self as one; devoid of mundane caste, qualities, and activities; devoid of contamination by the six enemies (lust, anger, greed, illusion, pride, and envy) and the six waves (distress, illusion, hunger, thirst, old age, and death); the personification of transcendental knowledge and bliss; beyond duality, yet the basis of all material dualities; the Supersoul of all living entities; all-pervading inside and outside like the vast sky; endowed with uninterrupted bliss; immeasurable; known only through spiritual realization; and directly self-manifesting—one who directly realizes the Self (as one sees an amlaki fruit in the palm of his hand), who lives always satisfied, devoid of faults like lust and anger, who possesses qualities like peacefulness and self-control, who is devoid of envy, the

thirst for material enjoyment, illusion, and other faults, and who is untouched by pride, false ego, and so on—such a person is a brahmana. This is also the opinion of the srutis, smrtis, Itihasas, Puranas, and other scriptures. Otherwise one cannot be a real brahmana.”

Questions put forth by the brahmana community of East Bengal (Bangladesh), who are opposed to and violators of the Vedic injunctions.

Violating the above statement of the sruti and with a desire to propagate philosophy averse to the Vedas, the brahmana community of East Bengal put forward a question through their representatives, the caste Gosvamis, in the month of October in the city of Dhaka. They requested an answer from the Sri Madhva Gaudiya Matha of Dhaka, but what to speak of hearing the answer, the way they misbehaved was condemned in the Gaudya magazine. Since many people requested a serial presentation of this criticism, we are publishing the following article.

The questions of the caste Gosvamis who are averse to the devotional service of Lord Visnu and are harassed by the smarta community are as follows: “A brahmana boy should be brought for undergoing the sacred thread ceremony at the age of eight.’ What is the meaning of the word brahmana mentioned in this Vedic statement? Does it refer to the caste brahmanas who study the Vedas and perform austerities, or simply to those who are born in the family of brahmanas, the seminal brahmanas?”

The answers of the spiritual brahmanas from Sri Madhva Gaudiya Matha are as follows: “If one accepts persons who have undergone various austerities as brahmanas, then it will certainly be improper, because they are devoid of qualities like knowing past, present, and future, they possess gross vision, they lack transcendental qualities, and they are unable to ascertain the truth because they take support of pratyaksa and anumana as evidence rather than transcendental sound. Therefore they are unqualified to be addressed as brahmanas, and they are unfit for the sacred thread ceremony, because they do not possess the appropriate qualifications. In answer to the second question, qualities like austerity arise after the study of the scriptures, therefore the position of a brahmana is dependent both on the study of the scriptures and undergoing austerities, which are not possible at the age of eight. So

undergoing the sacred thread ceremony at the age of eight is not improper, rather it is proper. Therefore one should accept our authorized path.”

By their questions, the seminal brahmanas are trying to establish that they are the real brahmanas.

The caste Gosvams and their descendents are unable to accept the considerations of the srutis, smrtis, and Puranas.

In Bhagavad-gita (4.13) the Supreme Lord as said: *catur-varnyam maya srstam guna-karma-vibhagasah*—“According to the three modes of material nature and the work associated with them, the four divisions of human society are created by Me.” And the Sri mad Bhagavatam (11.5.2) states:

*mukha-bahuru-padebhyah purusasyasramaih saha*

*catvaro jajnire varna gunair vipradayah prthak*

“Each of the four social orders, headed by the brahmanas, was born through different combinations of the modes of nature, from the face, arms, thighs and feet of the Supreme Lord in His universal form. Thus the four spiritual orders were also generated.” The caste Gosvamis and their caretakers, the smarta community, who are situated in the perverted varnasrama system, are not ready to accept these statements of Bhagavad-gita and Bhagavatam with proper consideration. We will gradually and elaborately discuss the value of their considerations. But first of all we would like to say that they do not accept the smrtis and the Puranas, which are in pursuance of the sruti. Therefore, being unable to accept the real meaning of the Vedas, they create confusion which in turn produces further disturbances. The rules for the sacred thread ceremony found in the fourth khanda, fourth prapathaka of the Chandogya Upanisad of Sama Veda mentions that a boy should be awarded the sacred thread between the age of eight and sixteen years. Apart from that, the procedure for the sacred thread ceremony at other times is also found.

The Vedic fruitive workers do not agree to award the sacred thread to a fallen boy who has crossed the age of sixteen without undergoing the enjoined ceremony.

But the mental speculators and the devotees reject the ideas of the fruitive workers and follow other branches of the Vedas. The fruitive workers, who follow the indirect path, are unable to realize transcendence knowledge and the service of the transcendental Lord. That is why they cannot imagine that the Vedic literatures teach one to become detached from fruitive activities and aspire for the ultimate goal of one's constitutional propensities. Their only asset is their seminal brahmanism.

The Vedas, the branches of the Vedas, and the Kalpa-sastras approve the system of Vedic tridanda-sannyasa and the wearing of saffron cloth.

It is stated in Bhagavad-gita: na buddhi-bhedam janayed ajnanam karma-sanginam— “Let not the wise disrupt the minds of the ignorant who are attached to fruitive action.” The different branches of the Vedas are nondifferent from the Vedas. Calculation of years and so on and conceptions of time are included in the Kalpa-sastras, which are part of the Vedic branch of astrological knowledge. In different branches of the Vedas there are various subbranches of Kalpa-sastras and Jyotisa-sastras. A particular branch of fruitive activities nourishes various conceptions of the innumerable branches of the Vedas. An arrangement for wearing saffron cloth is found in the Vajasaneya Katyayana Grhya-sutra of the Kalpa-sastras while ascertaining one's dress. In other Kalpa-sastras of the Ekayana branch of the Vedas, however, the wearing of saffron robes has been forbidden. One branch of Vedic knowledge does not reject another branch of knowledge, rather it respects it. The seminal method is not the only method for ascertaining who is a brahmana. These topics are elaborately described in Kasmir-agama. The arguments presented by Apayya Diksita out of disrespect for Sri Yamunacarya, the king of Vaisnavas, without understanding the teachings of the Ekayana branch, are extremely insignificant. Apayya Diksita was simply an atheistic scholar attached to false arguments. He was against the Vedic tridanda system and was unsuccessful in establishing that the devotees were non-brahmanas. Sri Purusottama Maharaja, a follower of the

Vallabhacarya-sampradaya, has properly punished him for the mischief that he displayed in his Kalpataru-parimala commentary on Sri Sankaracarya's Sariraka-bhasya on the Vedanta-sutras. If one patiently analyzes this, he will never desire to call the initiated Vaisnavas “non-brahmanas.” Due to absence of third birth, or spiritual initiation, the twice-born consider that the platform of savitra-janma is the highest. As a result, they even fall down from that platform of savitra due to disregarding great souls. The Vaisnava brahmanas of the Ekayana branch are not seminal brahmanas as the ignorant people consider, rather they are sons of Lord Visnu.

The ambitious seminal brahmanas are fruitive workers, yet averse to the seminal process of the Sama Veda.

Generally there are two opinions. Being devoid of devotion to Visnu, persons who belong to Brahma's material existence identify themselves as ambitious seminal brahmanas and undergo ten types of fruitive samskaras. Though the sons of Visnu undergo samskaras according to Vajasaneya Katyayana Grhya-sutras, they do not become entangled in fruitive activities.

The Madhva Gaudiya Vaisnavas have no objection against those who try to establish the system of seminal brahmanism, but their only concern is that the seminal process should not be polluted. Those who after duly undergoing the sacred thread ceremony in the seminal line violate and reject the smṛti injunctions regarding samskaras simply distort the very seminal process. The Madhva Gaudiya Vaisnavas quote the following verse from Bhargaviya Manu-samhita:

*yo 'nadhltiya dvijo vedam anyatra kurute sramam*

*sa jivan eva sudratvam asu gacchati sanvayah*

“A brahmana who gives up the study of the Vedas to labor hard for other things becomes a sudra in this very life along with all his family members.” How can one undergo the sacred thread samskara by deviating from this instruction? If the seminal process is the criteria for a



brahmana to undergo the sacred thread samskara, then why did the Sama Veda document the tradition of undergoing the sacred thread samskara while rejecting the seminal process?

The seminal brahmanas who follow the ascending process are averse to the Vedas.

The Madhva Gaudiya Vaisnavas clearly know and do not deny that the twenty Dharma-sastras and a few Kalpa-sutras support the process of the seminal brahmanas' sacred thread ceremony, therefore they know that these seminal brahmanas who follow the ascending process as averse to the Vedas because they transgress the qualities, activities, occupations, symptoms, and natures of candidates for the sacred thread. In our next article we will discuss how insignificant is the endeavor of the seminal communities, who disregard the qualities and occupation of a candidate. (Weekly Gaudiya, Vol.I, Part 29)

Brahmanism and Vaisnavism (by Srila Sac-cid-ananda Bhaktivinoda Thakura)

Brahmanism is a step towards Vaisnavism.

Many people think that brahmanism and Vaisnavism are two different things. From this belief, some foolish people who are partial to Vaisnavas criticize the brahmanas. And some, who are partial to brahmanas, criticize the Vaisnavas. But persons who know the science of the scriptures do not approve of this. They say that brahmanism is a stage or qualification of a Vaisnava and Vaisnavism is the fruit of brahmanism.

Sri Mahaprabhu has said:

*sahaje nirmala ei brahmana'-hrdaya*

*krsnera vasite ei yogya-sthana haya*

*matsarya'-candala kene ihan vasaile*

*parama pavitra sthana apavitra kaile*

“The heart of a brahmana is by nature very clean; therefore it is a proper

place for Krsna to sit. Why have you allowed jealousy to sit here also? Because of this, you have become like a candala, the lowest of men, and you have also contaminated a most purified place—your heart.” The sanctified heart of the living entity is called brahmanism. Devotional service to Krsna resides in that sanctified heart.

Envy is opposite to love of God, and envious persons are not brahmanas.

If envy, which is compared to a dog-eater, captures the sanctified heart of a living entity, then devotion to Krsna disappears from his heart. Then he no longer remains a brahmana. To feel distressed by seeing other's happiness and to feel happiness by seeing other's distress is called envy. Envy and love are diametrically opposite. Wherever there is envy, there is no love; and wherever there is love, there is no envy. A nonenvious heart is the only identification of a brahmana. It is certainly the residence of love of God.

Symptoms of a brahmana.

The symptoms of a brahmana are described in Snmad Bhagavatam (7.11.21) as follows:

*samo damas tapah saucam santosah ksantir arjavam*

*jnanam dayacyutatmatvam satyam ca brahma-laksanam*

“A brahmana must possess these eleven symptoms. One who does not possess peacefulness, self-control, austerity, purity, satisfaction, forgiveness, simplicity, knowledge, compassion, and devotion towards the Supreme Lord can not be called a brahmana.” In the heart of a brahmana with such qualities the science of Krsna always shines brightly. One who does not have devotion to Krsna is certainly not a brahmana.

The identification of a brahmana is only by qualities, not by caste.

Sri Narada Muni has stated in Snmad Bhagavatam (7.11.35) as follows:  
*yasya yal laksanam proktam pumso varnabhivyanjakam*

*yad anyatrapi drsyeta tat tenaiva vinirdiset*

“If one shows the symptoms of being a brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya or sudra, as described above, even if he has appeared in a different class, he should be accepted according to those symptoms of classification.”

In his commentary on this verse of Sri mad Bhagavatam, Sridhara Svami Mahasaya has stated: samadibhir eva brOhmanadi vyavaharo mukhyah, na jati matrad ity aha— yasyeti. yad yadi anyatra varnantare 'pi drsyeta tad varnantaram tenaiva laksana nimittenaiva varnena vinirddiseta, na tu jati nimittenety arthah—“The brahmanas' main characteristics are qualities such as peacefulness, not birth. If these main characteristics are seen in persons other than those born as brahmanas, then such persons should be considered brahmanas. They should not be considered according to their caste by birth.”

If we carefully analyze these statements of the Vaisnava scriptures and smrtis, such as Manu-samhita, which are very helpful for maintaining one's worldly life, then we understand that there are two types of brahmanas, namely ordinary brahmanas and spiritual brahmanas. Ordinary brahmanism is based on caste, and spiritual brahmanism is based on qualities.

Unless one becomes a spiritual brahmana he cannot become a Vaisnava.

The symptoms of a spiritual brahmana are mentioned in Brhad-aranyaka Upanisad (3.9.10) as follows:

*etad aksaram gargy aviditvasmal lokat praiti sa krpanah*

*atha ya etad aksaram gargi viditvasmal lokat praiti sa brahmanah*

“O daughter of Gargacarya, he who leaves this world without learning about the infallible Supreme is a krpana, or miser. O Gargi, one who is acquainted with that infallible truth by which one transcends death is a brahmana.”

There are ten kinds of ordinary activities like offering of oblations and funeral rites that are prescribed for the ordinary brahmanas. It is written in the smrti literature that by performing these activities an ordinary

brahmana becomes prestigious. Taking initiation, worshiping the Supreme Lord, accepting the renounced order of life, and observing vows for strengthening one's spiritual life are activities by which a spiritual brahmana is honored. Unless one achieves the platform of spiritual brahmanism, he cannot achieve the platform of Vaisnavism.

It is stated in Brhad-aranyaka (4.4.21) in this regard as follows:

*tam eva dhlro vijñaya prajñam kurvta brahmanah*

“A wise person who knows the Supreme Lord, Parabrahman, through the process of devotion, is a brahmana.”

A brahmana should aspire for knowledge of the relationship between matter, spirit, and the Supreme Lord. In other words, he should cultivate pure devotional service. After considering these conclusions of the scriptures, we can certainly understand that there is no difference between an advanced brahmana and a Vaisnava. When a brahmana's faith is awakened, his life becomes successful and he achieves devotion to the Lord.

There is no need to become a caste brahmana in order to attain the Supreme Lord.

By seeing the example of Jada Bharata many people doubt whether a low caste person who performs devotional service must be born in the family of a brahmana in order to achieve the goal of life. In this regard, we can always discuss the following conclusive statements of Bhagavad-gita:

*mam hi partha vyapasritya ye 'pi syuh papa-yonayah*

*striyo vaisyas tatha sudras te 'pi yanti param gatim*

*kim punar brahmanah punya bhakta rajarsayas tatha*

*anityam asukham lokam imam prapya bhajasva mam*

“O son of Prtha, those who take shelter in Me, though they be of lower

birth— women, vaisyas [merchants] and sudras [workers]—can attain the supreme destination. How much more this is so of the righteous brahmanas, the devotees and the saintly kings. Therefore, having come to this temporary, miserable world, engage in loving service unto Me.” Where is the doubt that if strong devotion for the Supreme Lord is awakened in the hearts of the brahmanas and ksatriyas that they will be delivered? Because even women, vaisyas, sudras, outcastes, and sinful candalas can attain the supreme destination by taking shelter of pure devotional service.

By the influence of devotional service one's position as an outcaste is destroyed and he becomes a spiritual brahmana.

If one understands the purport of the following two Bhagavad-gita verses directly preceding those quoted above, then he will have no doubts whatsoever.

*api cet su-duracaro bhajate mam ananya-bhak*

*sadhur eva sa mantavyah samyag vyavasito hi sah*

*ksipram bhavati dharmatma sasvac-chantim nigacchati*

*kaunteya pratijanhi na me bhaktah pranasyati*

The purport of these two verses are that living entities who become devotees or Vaisnavas generally possess brahminical qualities. If by the strength of the association of devotees a person attains unalloyed devotional service before possessing the wealth of brahminical qualities, then he should also be accepted as a devotee. Because by My mercy he will soon become a pious soul. In other words, brahmanism, which is the right of a Vaisnava, is attained by him as a concomitant fruit of devotional service. O son of Kuntl, such a person will never fall down in the form of taking rebirth, etc. This is My promise. I will bestow love of God by awarding him pure spiritual brahmanism in this life, without having to undergo atonement.

The brahmanas and the Vaisnavas are related as brothers.

O readers, do not differentiate between brahmanism and Vaisnavism. The brahmanas are naturally qualified to become Vaisnavas. That is why Lord Kṛṣṇa has displayed so much respect for the brahmanas who are qualified for pure devotional service. If we receive the causeless mercy of the brahmanas, we can become pure. No one can become a Vaisnava by disregarding the position of the brahmanas, and a brahmana can never become successful by disregarding the position of the Vaisnavas. Therefore let the natural brotherhood of the brahmanas and Vaisnavas shine brightly throughout the entire world. Do not let selfishness and foolishness enter between them and create enmity. In order to spread the prestige of the brahmanas in this world Śrīman Mahāprabhu enacted the pastime of curing His fever by drinking the caranamṛta of a brahmana. O brahmanas (pure devotees), please be merciful to us.

The varnasrama of Vaisnavas

In order to protect sanatana-dharma, the followers of the varnasrama principles need to follow the scriptural rules and regulations.

The Aryans of India who belong to the four varnas are situated in four asramas. The divisions of asramas have been produced along with the divisions of varnas. The principles of varna can be protected while remaining in any one of these four asramas—brahmacarya, grhastha, vanaprastha, or sannyasa. Those who belong to any of the varnas must certainly belong to one of the asramas. The principles of varna and asrama are under the jurisdiction of social provisions. Those who desire some benefit and reputation from the social varna and asrama system should wholeheartedly protect sanatana-dharma by following the ancient rules and regulations of those systems.

Of the two propensities, pravṛtti and nivṛtti, those following the path of nivṛtti are on the topmost platform of society.

The social human beings have two propensities, both of which are beneficial to the society. The social Aryans have arranged various rules and regulations so that no enmity is created in society. The arrangements and behavior that are followed in order to fulfil this principle purpose simultaneously bestow many secondary fruits such as attainment of the

heavenly planets and accumulation of piety. For persons who have fruitive propensities the Dharma-sastras prescribe the performance of sacrifices, offering oblations to the forefathers, undergoing samskaras, observing vows, residing in holy places, and bathing in holy waters. And for persons who possess the propensity for mental speculation the Dharma-sastras prescribe worshiping the demigods and brahmanas, respecting elderly persons, and attaining knowledge. Those who give up self-happiness and oneness with Brahman, which are the goals of these two propensities, are on the topmost platform of society.

Sectarian philosophers like the karmis, jnanis, and yogis, directly or indirectly desire the welfare of society.

While remaining in seclusion and eating foods cooked by brahmanas, the dry mental speculators try to assist society in reaching its perfection. The yogis proclaim that happiness is possible by minimizing one's necessities and thus increase people's attachment for enjoying happiness born of renunciation. Other sectarian philosophers benefit the society endeavoring for happiness through their manipulations and actions.

The Vaisnavas are beyond the principles of varnasrama.

Although the behavior of people who follow the varnasrama system is similar to that of Vaisnavas, the Vaisnavas do not consider that maintaining or benefiting society is their main purpose. They do not fill their hearts with the thought of making society prosperous or ruined by their actions. The Vaisnavas are not busy in establishing their own reputation in the four varnas and four asramas. The Vaisnava is not embarrassed if his actions violate the rules and regulations of the varnasrama system, because the only purpose of all his activities is to increase his devotion towards the Supreme Lord. It does not matter whether a Vaisnava is a brahmana, mlechha, or candala. Whether he is a householder or a renunciate, he has no honor or dishonor. If a Vaisnava goes to hell or heaven for the sake of devotional service to the Lord, it is the same thing. The love of God he exhibits while meeting the Supreme Lord does not diminish at all in separation from Him. A Vaisnava does not desire anything. He has no scarcity at all. One who is desirous of

merging into Brahman is overwhelmed by the excellence of his unattained goal. When attained, his long cherished wonder in the form of Brahman becomes abominable. One who desires to become one with Brahman is very restless, being bound by material shackles. The Vaisnavas, however, do not become impatient. Although the appearance and activities of Vaisnavas appear to be like those of people who wish to enjoy the fruits of their karma, they are actually completely different.

Unauthorized endeavor to make Vaisnavas subordinate to the varnasrama system.

Many people think that there is no difference between Vaisnavas and those who are inferior to the Vaisnavas. Hence they often inquire about the Vaisnava's varna and try to bury them in one of the four asramas like the socialites. Yet this endeavor is a social endeavor and totally opposed to Vaisnava culture.

If we see the transcendental appearance pastimes of Sri Gauranga, who is the deliverer of the fallen souls and the only spiritual master of the whole world, then all our doubts will be vanquished. In the Vedas, which consist of spiritual knowledge, it is stated:

*bhidyate hrdaya-granthis                      chidyante sarva-samsayah*

*kslyante casya karmani tasmin drste paravare*

“The knot in the heart is pierced, all misgivings are cut to pieces, and the chain of fruitive actions is terminated when one sees the Supreme Lord everywhere, within all superior and inferior beings.”

Under the guidance of Sri Gaurasundara, the Vaisnavas are servants of Gopi-jana-vallabha.

If we see the characteristics of the Lord, then all our doubts are cleared, the reactions of karma are diminished and the knots of the heart are untied. Then one realizes the Absolute Truth. Even if the well-behaved brahmanas who have undergone the ten samskaras attain the platform of Brahman, they cannot become doubtless until they see the transcendental characteristics of the Supreme Lord, Sri Krsna Caitanya.



The characteristics of Sri Caitanya are fully spiritual. Anyone who has seen this knows that a Vaisnava is neither a brahmana, a ksatriya, a vaisya, or a sudra, nor a brahmacari, grhastha, vanaprastha, or sannyasi. He is different than all of these, a servant of the servant of the most dear friend of the gopis. He has no other separate identification. The mundane conception of “I am great or tiny” does not touch him. A self-realized soul is unconcerned with temporary logics like “the sky in a pot,” “the vast sky,” and “the rope and the snake.”

The unauthorized interference in the authority of the Vaisnavas by the smartas, who are attached to fruitive activities, the prakṛta-sahajiyas, and the caste Gosvamis.

Some people nowadays have acted in a most non-Vaisnava manner by trying to establish the word “Vaisnava” as a social designation by attributing abominable and contrary meanings to it. It hurts me even to mention such behavior. They only try to become socialites, and with their temporary material identification they endeavor to pollute the bodies of the Vaisnavas.

After the disappearance of the transcendental pastimes of Sri Gaurāṅga deva, many smarta fruitive workers and mental speculators tried their best to defame the Vaisnavas, but on the pretext of cooperation the baula, sahajiya, and kartabhaja communities denigrated the Vaisnavas even more. There is no scarcity of such type of descendants even today. Gradually the number of such types are also increasing. The attempt to make Sri Haridasa Thakura a brahmana, the endeavor to adorn Sri Isvara Puri as a brahmana or a sudra, and the ability or inability of varnas other than brahmanas to impart Vaisnava teachings are the aspirations of the most grossly non-Vaisnava society. Such aspirations do not help to increase one's devotion, therefore these activities are not acceptable to the Vaisnavas.

The artificial servitorship of conditioned souls to Kṛṣṇa is an impediment for cultivation of loving devotional service.

A Vaisnava should always remember that he is not independent but a

dependent servant of the servant of the lover of the gopis. Mundane independence is not possible for him, because he has purchased his servitorship to Krsna by submitting his independence in the form of surrendering to Him. If this fact remains in the path of one's memory yet the above-mentioned arguments capture the heart, then it is to be understood that he has duplicitously submitted artificial independence to Krsna. Actually his subordination to the Lord has rather been sold to maya, and he is eager to be recognized as a servant of maya. A pseudo servant of Krsna is situated far away from a Vaisnava. Instead of cultivating love of God, he is simply suffering the temporary miseries born from cultivation of lust. The socialites have arranged their rules and regulations for the sake of these classes of people.

(Sajjana-tosanI, Vol. 11, Part 10)

Viprasamya, or similarity with a brahmana

Any person initiated into Visnu mantras by a bona fide spiritual master is qualified to worship sri-salagrama-sila.

While ascertaining the qualification for the kanistha-adhikarls' worship of Lord Visnu, Srila Sanatana Gosvami Prabhu has concluded that although according to the concocted remarks of some envious smartas only seminal brahmanas are qualified to worship salagrama and uninitiated women and sudras are not qualified, if a person, regardless of varna, is initiated into Visnu mantras by a bona fide spiritual master, he is qualified to worship Sri -salagrama. Because according to the scriptures Vaisnavas are accepted as equal to brahmanas even in ordinary consideration. In this regard, Srila Sanatana Gosvami Prabhu has quoted many scriptural statements in his Dig-darsini-tlka to prove this point. For example, he has quoted the statement of Lord Kapila from His conversation with Devahuti in Sri mad Bhagavatam (3.33.6): "To say nothing of the spiritual advancement of persons who see the Supreme Person face to face, even a person born in a family of dog-eaters immediately becomes eligible to perform Vedic sacrifices if he once utters the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead or chants about Him, hears about His pastimes, offers Him obeisances or even remembers Him." Again, from the topics of Prthu Maharaja in Sri mad

Bhagavatam (4.21.12), Srila Sanatana Gosvami Prabhu has quoted: “Maharaja Prthu was an unrivaled king and possessed the scepter for ruling all the seven islands on the surface of the globe.

No one could disobey his irrevocable orders but the saintly persons, the brahmanas and the descendants of the Supreme Personality of Godhead [the Vaisnavas].” In other words, Maharaja Prthu treated the brahmanas and Vaisnavas with equal vision. Srila Gosvami Prabhu has also quoted the statement of King Puranjana from Sri mad Bhagavatam (4.26.24) as follows: “O hero's wife, kindly tell me if someone has offended you. I am prepared to give such a person punishment as long as he does not belong to the brahmana caste. But for the servant of Muraripu [Krsna], I excuse no one within or beyond these three worlds. No one can freely move after offending you, for I am prepared to punish him.” In all these places the brahmanas and the Vaisnavas have been equally respected even in worldly dealings.

The explanation of the word viprasamya by the less-intelligent people.

At this juncture a doubt may arise that while the procedure to show respect equally to the brahmanas and the Vaisnavas in worldly dealings is there, and the acaryas have mentioned the word viprasamya, and while the word vipra refers to the subject of comparison, the word Vaisnava refers to the object being compared, so it is certainly indicated that the object being compared is inferior to the subject of comparison. For example, if we say that the face of Devadutta is like the moon, than we can understand that the face of Devadutta is not the moon, rather it has some similarity with the moon. Therefore, in beauty, the face is inferior to the moon. Considering in this way, some less-intelligent people may conclude that the word viprasamya indicates that although the Vaisnavas are equal to the brahmanas in some ways, they are nevertheless inferior to the brahmanas.

Explanation of the word viprasamya by intelligent people.

But before concluding in this way, one should patiently deliberate how it has been described everywhere that the beauty of the moon is more beautiful than a man's face. Furthermore it has always been the practice

to exhibit the similarities of a more beautiful and famous object with a less beautiful and nonfamous object, and thus the beauty of the latter has been established. In this type of comparison the fault of exaggeration may often arise. But if we carefully analyze the statements of the scriptures, then we will find that the devotees of the Lord have always been established as the topmost. If we study the commentary of Srila Sanatana Gosvami Prabhu with special attention, then we will know that a Vaisnava has not been compared with a brahmana in the same way that a face is compared with the moon; rather the fact that a Vaisnava is not inferior to a brahmana in any way as far as external prestige is concerned has been shown with gross external worldly considerations to envious people who are unqualified to see other's supremacy.

For example when the sastras explain the form of the Supreme Lord to a devotee who is attached to the opulent feature of the Lord, it conceals the most wonderfully sweet form of Sri Krsna and depicts Him with names like Narayana, Ksirodakasayi Visnu, or Brahman. By this process, the complete eternal form of Sri Krsna is not indicated, yet at the same time it is not a lie to call Krsna Ksirodakasayi or Narayana. The knowers of the science of Krsna understand that just as a person who possesses a million rupees also possesses a hundred rupees or a thousand rupees, or just as Brahman, Narayana, and Ksirodakasayi Visnu are inseparably present in the form of Krsna, or when Sri Krsna is explained as equal to Narayana, actually Sri Krsna is not inferior to Narayana, rather He is the source of Narayana. Similarly, though a Vaisnava is accepted as equal to a brahmana in the primary worldly consideration, yet a Vaisnava is nothing less than a brahmana, rather he is the crest jewel on the head of the brahmana communities. Because a worshiper of the Supreme Lord who knows Brahman is a Vaisnava. If by the word viprasamya it is concluded that a Vaisnava is inferior to a brahmana or only equal to a brahmana, then the behavior of sastras and sadhus would not have proved opposite. When Vaisnavas have been glorified thousands of times as greater than brahmanas, then it cannot be concluded that the word viprasamya means that a Vaisnava is inferior or equal to a brahmana. Among the brahmanas and Vaisnavas, the qualities of the brahmanas are a common factor. For example: in the numbers five and ten, the number five is present in both. Similarly brahmanism or brahminical

qualities are eternally present in Vaisnavas, hence the word viprasamya is indicated. Had it been a fact that brahmanas were glorified in many places in the scriptures as greater than Vaisnavas, then we would have accepted the meaning of the word viprasamya as being equal to the comparison of a face with the moon.

A Vaisnava is always a topmost brahmana.

It is mentioned in the Garuda Purana:

*brahmananam sahasrebhyah satra-yajl visisyate satra-yaji-sahasrebhyah sarva-vedanta-paragah*

*sarva-vedanta-vit-kotya visnu-bhakto visisyate*

“It is said that out of thousands of brahmanas, one is qualified to perform sacrifices, and out of many thousands of such qualified brahmanas expert in sacrificial offerings, one learned brahmana may have passed beyond all Vedic knowledge. Among many such brahmanas, one who is a devotee of Lord Visnu is the best.”

In Naradlya Purana it is stated:

*svapaco 'pi mahlpala visnor bhakto dvijadhikah*

“O king, a devotee of Lord Visnu, though born in a dog-eater family, is higher than a brahmana.”

The Hari-bhakti-vilasa quotes the Itihasa-samuccaya, wherein the Lord states:

*na me 'bhaktas catur-vedl mad-bhaktah sva-pacah priyah*

*tasmai deyam tato grahyam sa ca pujoyo yatha hy aham*

“Even though a person is a very learned scholar of the Sanskrit Vedic literatures, he is not accepted as My devotee unless he is pure in devotional service. However, even though a person is born in a family of dog-eaters, he is very dear to Me if he is a pure devotee who has no

motive to enjoy fruitive activity or mental speculation. Indeed, all respect should be given to him, and whatever he offers should be accepted. Such devotees are as worshipable as I am.” Even if the word viprasamya indicated that a Vaisnava should be considered equal to a brahmana, let alone inferior to a brahmana, then the Supreme Lord would have advised us to see a nondevotee brahmana who knows the four Vedas and a devotee of the Lord who is born in a dog-eater family on an equal level. Rather, He says that a devotee is nondifferent from Him, and a devotee is as worshipable as Himself; but a brahmana who knows the four Vedas is even lower than an ordinary dog-eater because he is devoid of devotion to the Lord. This is confirmed by the Lord as follows:

*candalo 'pi dvija-srestho hari-bhakti-parayanah*

*hari-bhakti-vihlnas ca dvijo 'pi svapacadhamah*

“Even if one is born in the family of a candala, if one engages in the devotional service of the Lord, he becomes the best of brahmanas. But even a brahmana who is devoid of devotional service is on the level of the lowest dog-eater.”

Grantha-rajā Śrīmad Bhagavatam establishes the supremacy of Vaisnavas.

It is stated in Śrīmad Bhagavatam (7.9.10) as follows:

*viprad dvi-sad-guna-yutad aravinda-nabha-*

*padaravinda-vimukhat svapacam varistham*

*manyate tad-arpita-mano-vacanahitārtha-*

*pranam punati sa kulam na tu bhurimanah*

The Vaisnavas who are attached to devotional service are naturally indifferent to fruitive activities. So if according to the considerations of the materialists the word viprasamya indicated that a Vaisnava is inferior or equal to a brahmana, then the above-mentioned verse from Śrīmad Bhagavatam would not have described as follows: “If a brahmana has all twelve of the brahminical qualifications [as they are stated in the book

called Sanat-sujata] but is not a devotee and is averse to the lotus feet of the Lord, he is certainly lower than a devotee who is a dog-eater but who has dedicated everything—mind, words, activities, wealth and life—to the Supreme Lord. Such a devotee is better than such a brahmana because the devotee can purify his whole family, whereas the so-called brahmana in a position of false prestige cannot purify even himself.”

Immediately after using the word viprasamya in his commentary on this verse,

Srila Sanatana Gosvami Prabhu has written: viprad dvi-sad-guna-yutad ity adi- vacanaiva-vaishnava-brahmanebhyo nlca-jati-jatanam api vaishnavanam sresthyam—“it has been established by various statements such as viprad dvi-sad that a low-born Vaisnava is greater than a nondevotee brahmana.” When such clear understanding is there, then other concocted narrow opinions are understood to be in the language of Srila Sanatana Gosvami Prabhu as matsarya-paraih smartaih kaiscit kalpitam iti mantavyam—“the wicked imagination of some envious smartas.”

It is prohibited to consider the Vaisnavas as belonging to a particular mundane caste.

But the word viprasamya that Srila Sanatana Gosvami Prabhu has mentioned is only to display primary worldly considerations. In other words, one should not consider a Vaisnava who is duly initiated into Visnu mantras but born in a family lower than the brahmanas in anyway inferior to a so-called brahmana, even by worldly considerations and mundane kanistha-adhikara consideration. One cannot deprive a Vaisnava from the qualifications of a brahmana. Because brahmanism is a common factor in a Vaisnava. A person born of any family becomes a brahmana by the influence of Vaisnava initiation, even at the stage of kanistha-adhikari. Srila Sanatana Gosvami's commentary on the yatha kancanatam verse is proof of this fact. He has given the evidence of Kapiladeva's statement that by the influence of hearing and chanting the holy names of the Lord a person born in the family of dog-eaters immediately becomes qualified to perform soma-yajna. But a Vaisnava who is attached to the service of Krsna does not run to perform fruitive

soma-yajna by giving up the sacrifice of chanting the holy names. At the same time he is fully qualified to perform the soma-yajna. In other words, according to worldly consideration, he is not less than a brahmana who performs soma-yajna. Therefore the acaryas and the sastras have never said that an initiated Vaisnava should be considered a dog-eater or belonging to a particular caste. By the word viprasamya the caste mentality towards a Vaisnava has been refuted.

The Vaisnavas are under the shelter of the holy names, therefore brahmanism is their pre-attained right.

Then where is the question of a Vaisnava's inferiority? The word brahmana indicates a majority of unnecessary fruitive actions, and the word Vaisnava indicates a majority of necessary devotional feelings, hence unnecessary fruitive actions are considerably less. This fact can be understood by the logic of “brhad- vratl and grha-vrata-purusa.” Though a Vaisnava appears in a dog-eater family, still he is not a non-brahmana. His brahminical qualifications are eternally perfected or previously acquired. This has been proved in the very next verse by Kapiladeva from Sri mad Bhagavatam (3.33.7):

*aho bata sva-paco 'to garlyan*

*yaj-jihvagre vartate nama tubhyam*

*tepus tapas te juhuvuh sasnur arya*

*brahmanucur nama grnanti ye te*

“Oh, how glorious are they whose tongues are chanting Your holy name! Even if born in the families of dog-eaters, such persons are worshipable. Persons who chant the holy name of Your Lordship must have executed all kinds of austerities and fire sacrifices and achieved all the good manners of the Aryans. To be chanting the holy name of Your Lordship, they must have bathed at holy places of pilgrimage, studied the Vedas and fulfilled everything required.” So when Vaisnavas born in dog-eater families but engaged in chanting the holy names of the Lord possess the



previously acquired brahminical qualities and are properly initiated according to the sastra and are inclined towards chanting the holy names in this life, then those who want to see them in their ordinary respective castes are certainly opposing the principles of Srimad Bhagavatam and are envious towards the devotees. Such people maintain animosity towards the book Bhagavata and devotee Bhagavata<sup>9</sup> and are proceeding towards hell, while dancing frantically like demons.

Vaisnava acaryas who were born in seminal brahmana families refuted the atheistic philosophy of considering Vaisnavas as belonging to particular castes.

If the opinion of the sastras were that Vaisnavas born in families lower than so- called brahmanas are inferior to the brahmanas, and the word viprasamya meant that the Vaisnavas are inferior to the brahmanas, then why doesn't the behavior of the Vaisnava acaryas support this? Did Acarya Srila Narottama Thakura commit a great offence by accepting as disciples Sripada Ganganarayana Cakravarti and Sripada Ramakrsna Bhattacharya, who were born in seminal brahmana families? From this example of the acarya, it is proved that the word viprasamya indicates that what to speak of a Vaisnava's being inferior or equal to a brahmana, rather he is qualified to become the spiritual master of brahmanas. Otherwise why did Srila Narahari Cakravarti Thakura, the author of Bhakti-ratnakara and a topmost Vaisnava born in a brahmana family, write as follows:

*sri-thakura narottama patita-pavana*

*tanra sisya cakravarti ganganarayana*

*ganganarayana vidyavanta atisaya*

*khandiya pasanda-mata' bhakti prakasaya*

“Srila Narottama dasa Thakura was a deliverer of the fallen souls. His disciple was Ganganarayana Cakravarti. Ganganarayana was learned scholar. He refuted atheistic philosophy and preached devotional service.” By using the word pasanda- mata, or atheistic philosophy, is it

not being indicated that the envious smartas are considering Srila Narottama Thakura as belonging to a particular caste? That is why Sri Narahari Cakravarti Thakura has mentioned the philosophy of the smartas as “atheistic philosophy.” He has written in the Bhakti-ratnakara, Fifteenth Wave:

*jaya jaya sri-ganganarayana cakravarti ati dhira gambhira*

“All glories to Sri Ganganarayana Cakravarti, who is very sober and grave.”

*sri la narottama-carana-saroruha-bhajana-parayana bhuvana-ujora*

“By worshiping the lotus feet of Srila Narottama dasa Thakura, I will cross over material existence.”

Under the shelter of sensual perception, the envious smartas and their feet lickers, the sahajiyas, glorify the darkness of hell.

Against the offensive mundane considerations of narrow-minded envious smartas and their feet licking sahajiyas of today, Sri la Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura, a follower of Sri Rupa Gosvami, instead of considering Sri la Narottama Thakura as belonging to a particular caste, displayed great respect befitting a nonduplicious disciple by composing the Sri Sri Narottama Prabhor-astakam prayers. This was not the exhibition of the pseudo respect of a sahajiya nor an offensive consideration in the guise of humility that a Vaisnava belongs to a particular caste. We will present with scriptural references and conclusions the behavior of the acaryas in our next article. But it is also a fact that envious people who are like owls cannot tolerate the sun rays of the devotee Bhagavata and book Bhagavata, thus they will continue to praise the darkness of hell forever. (Weekly Gaudiya, Vol. 4, Part 16)

(End of Acarya-santana)